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## THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

It has not proved possible, as we had hoped, to devote an entire issue during the past year to the subject of religion in higher education. We are happy, however, to publish as our leading article in this issue "Religion in the Colleges." The author, CLARENCE PROUTY SHEDD has been called "the unchallenged authority" in the field of religious work among students. He has written two books, *Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements*, Association Press, 1934, and *The Church Follows Its Students*, Yale University Press, 1938, in addition to individual chapters in other books and numerous magazine articles. Dr. Shedd is Stephen Merrell Clement Professor of Christian Methods in Yale Divinity School. About half of his time is devoted to the direction of research in studies in the field of religion in higher education. He is a Fellow of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education and this article develops certain ideas presented orally at a conference of the above-mentioned organization during September, 1940.

Comments on or replies to Dr. Riddle's article, "Why Study the Bible?" continue to arrive in the editor's mailbox. Professor MORTON E. ENSLIN of Crozer Theological Seminary has sent us the most recent of these, which we are glad to publish in the Discussion section.

A more lengthy criticism sent to us by WALTER W. SIKES of Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, is published as the second article in this issue. Dr. Sikes holds a Th. D. degree from Union Theological Seminary and is at present Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Berea College. He is President of the Southern

Society of Philosophy of Religion. Recent articles published by him include "The Bible and Social Change," which appeared in *Rational Religion*, and "The Anti-Semitism of the Fourth Gospel," which was published in *The Journal of Religion*.

THOMAS S. KEPLER, Professor of Bible and Religion at Lawrence College, Appleton, Wisconsin, has assisted the editor in condensing and writing an introduction to four contributions to a symposium on "College Classroom Methods in Teaching Religion."

ISAAC S. CORN, one of the contributors, is Professor of Religion at Illinois Wesleyan University. He received his doctor's degree from Boston University and was for ten years Professor of Biblical Literature at Wesley College School of Religion (affiliated with the University of North Dakota).

CHARLES F. KRAFT was granted a Ph. D. degree from the University of Chicago in 1937. During the past summer he served as Visiting Lecturer in Old Testament at The Iliff School of Theology. In September, 1940, he assumed a new position as head of the Department of Religion at Albion College, Albion, Michigan. Dr. Kraft is author of *The Strophic Structure of Hebrew Poetry as Illustrated in the First Book of the Psalter*.

ARTHUR C. WICKENDEN holds a degree of Ph. D. from the University of Chicago. Since 1927 he has been Professor of Religion and Director of Religious Activities at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. His recent book, *Youth Looks at Religion* was published by Harper's.

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## Religion in the Colleges

CLARENCE PROUTY SHEDD

### A. HOPEFUL FACTORS

**T**HERE are more grounds for hope than for discouragement in the present college religious situation. Perhaps the most encouraging fact is a new wistfulness and a searching for a satisfying philosophy of life which one finds today among many under-graduates. It would be foolish to make generalizations concerning the religious attitudes of all students, for the more than one million and a quarter students in our institutions of higher learning reflect all of the shades of religious training and conviction found in our American life. One may, however, speak with some assurance about a thoughtful minority—probably not more than 25 per cent of the average college—but a minority which exerts an influence on campus thinking and practice that is out of all proportion to its size. For many of these students the events of the last few years have been soul-shaking. "We are tired," said a Bucknell student quoted by Richard T. Baker in the September, 1940, *Christian Herald* "of living from one snap judgment to the next. We want a permanent sense of direction, a feeling of belonging to a tradition that has value and meaning, and we need help in the daily judgments we have to make."

In similar vein the *Yale Daily News* in an editorial for January 18, 1940, said:

"... Not a few undergraduates are more than ever finding it necessary to

form a new evaluation of life, a new faith in the lasting spiritual values in a world suffering from some strange paralysis of the will, and lack of purpose . . . It has become apparent that to find again the way we have lost there must be a new recourse to religious principles, not as the opiate of the people nor an anesthetic to hold the masses subservient, but a rediscovery of moral truth that makes men free and progress durable."

Confessions of faith like this could be taken from the recent files of most college papers. Such declarations are heard now in student conferences much more frequently than formerly. The proof of their sincerity is found in the activities which implement these words. There has been a marked increase in attendance at student religious conferences, more demand for and response to significant worship experiences, a reviving interest in personal and group Bible study, a readiness to participate in meetings interpreting Christian faith, such as the Religion in Life Weeks, and a determination to find channels for social study and action, both in the school year and in the summer, which go beyond the traditional forms of social service. For the thoughtful student religious faith has no meaning unless it has some obvious or discoverable relevance to the present chaotic social situation.

The Student Christian Associations—the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.—are not "on their way out" as some would have



us believe, nor are the influences of churches progressively weakening. In fact, the opposite is nearer the truth. Both Christian Associations and churches, Roman Catholic and Jewish as well as Protestant, exercise a stronger influence over the total college religious situation than they did ten years ago.

The churches are following their students today with a higher type of preaching and pastoral leadership than ever before and also with denominational university pastors, both men and women, who in personality, character and training are qualified for their work of counseling both on matters of life philosophy and student program, and who are prepared to work in close comradeship with faculty as well as students on the concerns of religion.

Moreover, one does not need to be a prophet; he only needs to know what is going on in hundreds of colleges and in national movements to say that, barring a set-back coming out of the present overshadowing influence of the world crisis, marked improvement in the place of religion in college life may be expected in the next decade.

Out of forces at present at work in the college world there is emerging in the United States a new Student Christian Movement which, both in its local and intercollegiate aspects, is drawing together in fellowship and work church, Christian Association, and administration-sponsored groups. These in turn are reaching out for campus student religious solidarity on an interfaith basis. This is happening without the breaking of connections that local groups have had with the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., or the denominations. This new Christian Movement among students is a work of the Spirit of God and not one of clever organizational relationships. It calls upon all Christian students to share in the work

both of the churches and of a campus Christian Association through which students, whether members of the Church or not, do their Christian work without distinction as to denominations and with a sense of being members of a world Christian community which rises above all the barriers and embitterments created by ecclesiastical divisions and by international, interracial and class warfare.

In many ways there is a steady growth among church and Christian Association groups of this common experience. A study just completed of cooperative plans in 156 colleges reveals that it is the rule rather than the exception today that, where several student religious groups exist on a campus, some type of Christian Student Council or Interfaith Council (generally both) binds them together for campus-wide Christian and interfaith study and activity. There has been no time in student religious history when the sense of being partners in the worldwide work of the World's Student Christian Federation has meant so much as today. Here is a world Christian fellowship quite unbroken by war. Channels for cooperative work nationally among the denominations and with the Christian Associations are found in the work of the University Commission of the Council of Church Boards of Education. The national boards of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. have given increasing support to the National Intercollegiate Christian Council created by the students, professors, and secretaries, who are the constituency of the Student Christian Associations. Through its annual national assemblies and conferences the N.I.C.C. gives leadership to the united work of the men's and women's movements and their cooperative work with church and with interfaith groups nationally and locally. Related to the N.I.C.C. are some 1400 local groups. Many of these do not have the name



Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A., but, as church groups or Student Christian Associations, they regard themselves as members of the National Student Christian Movement and share in financing the movement and in making its policies.

Following the meeting of the N.I.C.C. at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, this September there took place for the first time a joint meeting of the staffs of the N.I.C.C. and of the University Commission of the Council of Church Boards of Education—a meeting of great significance since these two bodies are responsibly related to all but a very few of the organized Christian student groups in the United States.

The essential thing about the present religious organization situation is that there is a *mood for change*, that such change as has been made is in the right direction, and that the processes for orderly change are so set that we have a right to expect increasing fellowship and unity among Christian student groups on American college campuses.

Certain other factors of hope should be noted in relation to the student religious groups. The standards for the professional leadership of church and Christian Association groups have risen steadily and today most full-time church directors of student religious programs and Christian Association secretaries have had graduate professional training that is at least the equivalent of that obtained by the minister who has taken his B.D. in any of the nationally known seminaries of the country. In quite a few cases campus religious leaders have both their B.D. and M.A. In a few instances they have their Ph.D.'s. This is a far cry from the graduate coach idea of a quarter of a century ago. Then the Christian Association secretary was a recent college graduate who had been successful as an undergraduate leader and who stayed on for two or three years as a secretary.

Another factor is the wide experimenta-

tion in new forms of student religious program. We are too close to much of this to evaluate it properly. But one is bound to believe that through this Christian movement among students, prophetic ways are being pioneered of interpreting Christian faith and of carrying forward Christian work in such areas as men's and women's relationships, summer service and study groups, interracial fellowship and work, religion and public affairs, interfaith fellowship and activity, worship, and spiritual disciplines for personal life that will have great consequences for the religious life of the colleges and widen the spiritual horizons of the whole church.

Perhaps the most encouraging factor in the college religious scene is the growing sense of responsibility on the part of college administrators for integrating religion with the whole work of higher education. This is true even of state universities where a good many presidents, who ten years ago felt their hands were tied by legal limitations, now tend to believe that they have more freedom for direct religious leadership than they are using, and who are looking about for some better plan for religion on their campuses. This feeling is buttressed by the conviction that it was the intention of the founders of our universities to free them from sectarian controls but not to divorce them from religion. Most thoughtful educators today would agree with Dr. George F. Zook of the American Council on Education who, in his recent annual presidential report, asserts that "while our form of government plainly provides for the separation of church and state" nevertheless "this important provision . . . was not in any way intended to deny the fundamental place of religion in our cultural life." Because of fears of "stirring up controversy on a delicate subject there has been almost no consideration of the place of religion in education in our publicly controlled schools and colleges" . . . a "neglect" that



"is becoming increasingly unsatisfactory to many thoughtful citizens."

This new concern is leading the state universities to give more encouragement to privately supported Bible Chairs and Schools of Religion, as at the University of Iowa, and to a study of the courses in religion that might be offered as a part of the regular curriculum of the university and to give much more support (frequently including financial grants) to the work of the Christian Associations and churches. In the private and church-related colleges there has been a distinct strengthening in the past decade of the departments of religion, and recently in some colleges there has been significant experimentation in new types of religious orientation courses. More experiment in this area is needed, for in the great majority of cases departments of religion have changed their course offerings very little in the last two decades. The courses offered to undergraduates tend to duplicate too closely those taken by the instructors while studying in theological seminary.

Today many college administrators—state as well as church-related—are examining their entire curriculum to discover in what legitimate ways religion may be taught and its values shared through courses other than those given by or in a department of religion. We do religion a great disservice when we drag it in where it does not belong, but we are guilty of an even greater wrong when we fail to give it its proper place as a part of our entire cultural heritage and as a present force in the life of the world. Religion is one thing about which a college cannot be neutral if it is trying seriously to relate the work of education to life. It may ridicule religion but it cannot ignore it.

The past decade has witnessed the beginnings of philanthropic foundations having as their primary interest the strengthening of religion in higher education. The best known is the Edward W. Hazen Foundation which, through its conferences on counsel-

ing, its Agency Grants for personal hospitality, and its subsidies for the Hazen book conferences, Student Christian Associations and many other special projects, has already profoundly influenced the religious life of our colleges. A more recent body, the Danforth Foundation, has taken as its first project the sponsoring of a conference for college professors at Camp Miniwanca, Shelby, Michigan, on "Christianity on the College Campus."

Perhaps one of the most hopeful signs of concern is found in the increase in the past ten years of new comprehensive plans for college religious life and program. A special study made a year ago of 100 such plans shows a common concern for a plan that is indigenous and that draws together in united work all the religious forces on these campuses, but there is little identity in the details of these plans.

#### B. DISCOURAGING FACTORS

This analysis of some of the grounds for encouragement in the present college religious situation may seem to suggest that the writer believes that the colleges are "not far from the Kingdom." On the contrary, these hopeful judgments have been relative only to the history of religion in the colleges and to the difficulties of the present situation. Only in very rare cases have colleges been doing fundamental *thinking* about the place of religion in higher education. Much can be done for the growth of religion among students through the "provisions for religion" even in a situation where the total life of the institution belies its professions of concern for religion, but much more might be done in a situation where the college is earnestly seeking to create a community of learning which in every phase of its life reinforces its professions and the work of the instrumentalities of religious education and fellowship.

No one who knows anything about stu-



ents and colleges and the world can say that these are easy days for religious work with students. The difficulties of the past two decades have been enormous, coming as they have out of the secularization of life in general, the growing complexity of the contemporary college and university scene, the baffling personal and social problems created by the madness and confusion of our hour of history, and by radical changes in theology and the church.

There are many discouraging facts. If credit courses of religion are put on an elective basis, the percentage of students who take these courses in any college will be very small, except in those rare cases of exceptional teachers or where such courses become known among the students, if not among the faculty, as "football" or "crip" courses. The recent studies of trends in the teaching of religion also suggest that, when students are given a choice between biblical courses or courses in Christian ethics, philosophy of religion or psychology of religion, given equally good instruction, the biblical courses are less likely to be elected.

It is doubtful if the total religious program, curricular and extracurricular, in moderate sized private and church-related colleges significantly influences the religious thinking and living of as many as fifty per cent of the student body. True, a whole student body may be "sprayed" with religion through required courses, compulsory chapel, religious emphasis weeks, and certain stunts, but I am talking only about the kind of influence that forms convictions and gives direction to life. Certainly in our larger universities—and we tend to forget how much size conditions our work—it is only in rare instances that as many as twenty-five per cent of the students are influenced significantly either by the courses in religion or the work of the religious groups. In the largest universities fifteen per cent to twenty per cent would be a safer estimate. Yet in these universities are

Bible Chairs, Schools of Religion, Y.M. and Y.W.C.A. secretaries, directors of student religious life, and denominational university pastors. The writer does not believe that any view of religion that is intellectually defensible and that has relevance to the social scene can ever "capture a campus"—religion at its deepest and most significant points will always be the concern of a minority in any community. But is it not fair to ask two questions? First, Can we not conceive of higher religious and social intelligence as the possession of a *larger minority* than now exists on most campuses? Second, might not a plan be devised which would cause the values of religion so to permeate the life of a college that they would be a force in lifting the level of life for the community and for the individual student, even though there were no definite espousal of religious faith?

Moreover, in too many cases, administrative good will for religion does not rest on the solid foundation of religious intelligence and social concern, with the result that, too frequently, new total plans for the religious life of students are hastily conceived and, in their functioning, may stifle creative religious and social pioneering among faculty and students. If a *new* plan for religion is also to be a *better* plan, the motivation for it must rise above the proper desire for administrative unity and efficiency or the determination to "protect" students from "disturbing" religious or social views. We must be glad for all this new administrative interest, most of which is sincere, but from some source guidance is desperately needed in the development of criteria by which proposals for bettering the present situation may be judged. It is an interesting commentary on the present situation that, in too many cases, there has been no fundamental thinking about a plan for religion until some philanthropic friend has made a gift to the college of a chapel, and even then the solution is likely to be the easy



one, "Let's appoint a chaplain." This is not a point against either chapels or chaplains—colleges have been luckier than they deserve on both of these matters—rather it is a call for the unhurried planning of adequate college programs of religion. It is also a caution against the dangers of over-publicizing as "revolutionary" plans that are the products of administrative exigencies rather than of wise planning.

There is need for more humility in the presence of the complexities of the modern large university. The facts are that we know very little about how to handle the religious problems of the large university. I can think of no large university religious plan that is even relatively adequate for meeting the religious needs of its student body. That we are learning how to do better work with the twenty-five per cent, or less, influenced by our program is important and a proper source of satisfaction, but we are haunted by the needs of the other seventy-five per cent. This desire to find new and more adequate ways is our despair and the college's hope.

Certain other discouraging factors need to be mentioned. Although progress towards a new and better Student Christian Movement is clear and definite—and about its existence in a spiritual sense there can be no doubt—yet the national pattern for organizational structure is slow in emerging. The present is a strange moment for there is abroad among many leaders of denominational students' programs, at one and the same time, a heightened sense of denominationalism and more of good will and a desire for ecumenic activity than has been present for a long time. In the case of several denominations, the last two or three years have witnessed more emphasis on a stronger and a more denominationally conscious student program, the assumption being that this is the essential prerequisite to the growth locally and nationally of a better interdenominational program. There is much truth in

this, but it also has hidden in it the danger that a great deal of unnecessary student organizational machinery may be created that has to be sustained and that, contrary to the desires of its leaders, may become a stumbling block in the development of a real ecumenic Christian movement among students. Real training in student churchmanship certainly involves not only loyalty to one's own church and denomination but also participation in a campus Christian Movement which unites all Christian-minded students regardless of denomination in the task of building Christian faith and brotherly and just world.

A most serious source of discouragement is found in the fact that too frequently religious plans for larger universities have centered too much on professional workers and too little on students, hence they have succeeded better in developing fellowship and tolerance among workers, Christians and Jewish, than they have in building among students either an inclusive and crusading campus Christian movement or student religious solidarity on an interfaith basis. Our hard days call for united Christian and religious fellowship and crusade and not just for tolerance.

### C. SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

It is against such a background that the writer wishes to venture suggestions on some guiding principles for a college religious program. He does this with great timidity and warns that like railroad timetables they are "subject to change without notice."

1) The college that seeks to be religious will make it evident to students that religion is an integral part of higher education. The total impact of the college on the student's life will be a religious one. Through the impact of its whole life on students it will make devotion to truth, goodness, and beauty characteristic of normal living. Religion will



communicated and mediated not merely through courses on religion, worship, Christian Associations and churches, but also through the aims, the teaching and disciplinary methods, the spiritual as well as intellectual qualifications of its faculty, the teacher-student relationships and the college's known devotion to truth. The formal and informal provisions for religion will not be "extras" nor on the periphery but an integral part of the work and fellowship of the community. There will be no religious tests—church membership or doctrinal—for its faculty, but the college in making appointments, will consider the contribution that the teacher's philosophy of life will make to the religious purposes of the college, as well as his scholarship and teaching ability. Religious insights and values are communicated as much through the intimacies of classroom and community relationships as they are through the words of, or about religion. *Religion is both caught and taught.* The college will be a community in which students and teachers are comrades in the search for the truth and in which there is a substantial unity between the informal and formal processes of education. Such a sense of intellectual and spiritual fellowship will be an important factor in drawing together students and faculty in creative religious and social pioneering.

2) The central touchstone in religious policy and program of the college will be the student—his needs now as a citizen in his complex and disturbing college world and his future needs as a potential leader in the work of the world. This concern for the student as a person and as a future world citizen will be reinforced by the college's convictions that it cannot share with him the culture of the past without revealing the great part—some of it good and some of it bad—that religion, as embodied in the Hebrew-Christian tradition, has had in shaping our civilization. In moments like these we cannot forget the great part that in other

dark days the church has had in keeping the lights of civilization from completely going out. So the college's religious program will start *both* from its concern for the student and from its own sense of responsibility for sharing a culture in which the influences of religious faith and pioneering have always been inextricably interwoven.

3) Religion, and particularly the Hebrew-Christian faith, will be taught through courses given by professors who in scholarship, academic standards, teaching ability, interest in students, religious experience and insights are the equal of any members of the faculty. There will be a department of religion with a status comparable to that of any of the other major departments in the liberal arts curriculum. It will not only offer courses in religion but will seek to aid the entire faculty in making religion an integrating and unifying influence in the entire curriculum. Such teaching must be as objective in character as that of any of the other intellectual disciplines, but when taught by men and women who have both competence and depth of religious life, it will inevitably develop religious intelligence, mature religious convictions, and motivate for a life of social and religious usefulness. The department of religion will be one which makes frequent significant contributions to our understanding of the materials and methods by which we really teach religion to students. It would help greatly the achievement of this end if the teacher would honestly decide what materials he would use and how he would organize them *if students could take only one course in religion.* Moreover, it should be intellectually respectable—as it is not today in many colleges—for professors in *all departments* to give a religious interpretation of their materials when the materials seem to demand it. It is a great disservice to religion to lug it in where it does not belong, but it is an equally great disservice to avoid reference to a religious view of life and the universe



at those points where subject matter seems to demand it. If we really seek to teach religion to undergraduates we will scrutinize our total curriculum in an effort to discover those places in which religion or a religious view of life and the universe inescapably belongs.

4) An adequate college plan will make large place for and encourage some campus Christian Association. Much of the history of the Christian Church during the past two hundred years can be written around the creative religious and social pioneering of such groups. The local Christian Association must be one which grows out of the religious history of the college and which has relevance to the contemporary religious situation in the college and in the world. It must be the students' own enterprise, sponsored and encouraged by faculty and administration but not controlled by them.

The students must feel themselves, through the World's Student Christian Federation, a part of the wider student religious world—influencing it and influenced by it. Students in every area of life, notably the religious, seek widest intercollegiate and world fellowship. The fellowship and resources of the national Student Christian Movement should be available. Student conferences, today as always, open the door for deepening the religious insights and experiences of students in ways not possible through the best local campus program.

5) The college religious program, voluntary and curricular, will have at its heart a conception of religion that is intellectually defensible and relevant to the urgent social issues of the day. The college will take the point of view that its business is not that of adjusting students to the status quo but rather that of going on intellectual and spiritual pilgrimages with students in search of a way of life for all men which is founded on truth and justice. It will seek a curricular and voluntary religious program which aids all students in their efforts to find a

satisfying philosophy of life and to take part, worthy of their privileges, in building a better world. It will "*searchingly expose* students to *religious values* and *definitely aim to be "faith-provoking."* It will not be afraid of, but rather will welcome the work of religious and social minorities, realizing that, in the long day, the work of some minority movement may mean more to the religious life of colleges and the Kingdom of God than all the general work of religious education. It will not expect the Student Christian Association and church groups to be comfortable places, but rather that in a real sense they should be centers of intellectual and spiritual disturbance encouraging free discussion and considered actions always seeking new and constructive solutions for the baffling social and religious problems of our day.

6) It will develop loyalty to the churches and the Church, drawing into close fellowship teachers of religion, leaders of Christian Associations, and church groups, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish, and other religious groups, within and outside of the curriculum, which directly influence the religious life of students. Among the Christian groups there will be a steady growth of a sense of common Christian cause and among all religious groups the experience of interfaith solidarity and fellowship. Because the recovering of the unity of the Church of Christ is so desperately needed in our embittered world, it is especially important that the religious plan draw the divided Protestant forces together so that students will have, while undergraduates, an understanding of the significance of a united Church. It is also a moment when those communions which are rooted in the Hebrew-Christian tradition need to draw more closely together in fellowship and work, exalting not just their tolerance of one another but their common faith in One God, the Father of all men, who calls upon all men yet to build a brotherly world.



7) A total plan for a college will make provisions for corporate worship, with students and faculty sharing together in planning services which are personally integrative and socially useful. Worship will become a central, not a casual, factor in the college religious program. Whether attendance is required or voluntary, the college will put its chapel program in a central place, giving responsibility for chapel services to those who have skill in the planning and leadership of worship services.

It must be more than a symbol of the college's historical and present conviction that religion and education belong together; it must be a summons of the whole community to a vital faith in God, a faith that will endure when all the other foundations of civilization crumble. Students and faculty alike need this in these days more than they need anything else. More important than the much debated question of "voluntary or required" or even the kind of chapel building is the question of the kind of worship service which we offer to students. In far too many colleges, chapel as now conducted is a discredit to the college and a disservice to religion. This means that pep talks and rallies, important as they are, should be dissociated from chapel and put in student body meetings or assemblies. It may well be that chapel should come less frequently in order to allow room in the schedule for one or more student assemblies a week. The college chapel program will be so conducted that students see the interrelation between worship, instruction, student religious inquiry and Christian social action—that they are aspects of one experience of religion.

8) A college program of religion will demand the highest academic character and personality qualifications of those leading its program of religion as teachers, Christian Association secretaries, directors of religious activities, and church workers. They must be people who love students and can work

in comradeship with them. They must have high intellectual integrity, subjecting themselves to as severe intellectual and spiritual disciplines as any other members of the faculty. They must view their tasks as mediators of religious faith and experience and not merely as those who "give courses," or build organizations. They must know the real world and be at home in it. They must have a reasoned faith relevant to the world of today, an experience of religion that is kindling and which students know to be authentic, and a view of the church which rises above their own denomination and all the other barriers created by the accidents of church history. They must be people who face with capacity and courage the divisive issues of their day and who do their work with a sense of comradeship with Christian students everywhere.

No one can be more aware than the writer that the guiding principles set down above are neither inspired nor adequate. The problem confronting all of us who are eager to see the whole work of higher education undergirded and illuminated by the eternal values of religious faith and conviction has seldom been better stated than in the following words of Professor William Ernest Hocking of Harvard.

"If I were to name the chief defect of contemporary education, it would be that it produces so many stunted wills, prematurely grey, incapable of greatness, not because of lack of endowment, but because they have never been searchingly exposed to what is noble, generous and faith provoking."

It is the writer's conviction that if college programs of religion were frequently tested by *some such* criteria as those suggested above, inadequate as they are, more rapid progress might be made than is being made towards curing this "defect of contemporary education."



# Objectives and Method in Studying the Bible

WALTER W. SIKES

IN HIS recent article, "Why Study the Bible Today,"<sup>1</sup> Professor D. W. Riddle holds that "the only fully rational, and therefore fully adequate, basis and procedure for Bible study" is to study the Bible with the intention of finding out the *how* rather than the *what*. The content of ideas is of negligible if not completely negative value, while information concerning the "religious process" or "religious development" revealed in the Bible is of great importance.

Few, I think, if any, will dissent from the bare assertion that biblical ideas cannot be lifted out of their sociological and historical context as norms for today—or any day. Also general agreement will probably be accorded the thesis that the ethical practices and religious conceptions of the Bible were influenced by the sociological factors of the situation in which they were formulated. We do need therefore to see as much as possible of how these ideas and customs were shaped. Certainly no competent teacher would allow his students to miss these patent facts. Professor Riddle's basal error—and it is serious—lies in his exclusion of all other interests than that of sociological process. This radical positivism seems to me to be neither fully rational nor adequate.

1. In the first place, the method suggested leads to confusion of the *what*, the *how*, and the *why*; and Professor Riddle falls into this confusion. When one insists that the Bible must be studied descriptively and never normatively he confuses the fact that inquiry into sociological process must either confine itself purely to description of content—i.e. what happened, the *what is*,—or by raising the question of sociological causes it must pass into inquiry as to moti-

vation, the *why*. The article under consideration illustrates how completely a descriptive sociologist can err in applying his principle of description when religious norms are involved—as they always are even when we regard the Bible as completely irrelevant to them, as does Professor Riddle. For the article asserts that one can properly ask only, *How?* but immediately begins analysis of psychological motives, ethical norms, and religious principles. Both the illustrations which he chooses, the racial universalism and the pacifism of early Christians, lead him to assign to these Christians certain exclusive motives and value judgments. He thus mistakes sequence for necessary consequence and one antecedent for exclusive cause. He accounts for the eradication of racial barriers within the Christian group by pointing to one factor in the Graeco-Roman world; viz., the "current individualism" which "swept the world" after the failure of Alexander's totalitarian ambitions. In this world one had the choice between the arduous Stoic world citizenship and social solidarity, and the easier affirmation of personal value of one's self and individual worth; Christians chose the latter. Now this is certainly a simple analysis—obviously much too simple. As a matter of fact, neither social solidarity nor individual worth was excluded from Stoicism or from Christianity.

But even if this simple choice were real, it does not explain why Christianity transcended racial and other barriers. The situation was generally constant throughout the Empire, but the Graeco-Roman world did not divide neatly at the point indicated. Racial antagonisms continued in non-Stoic groups. Official Judaism remained racially

<sup>1</sup>JBR, VIII (May, 1940), pages 67-71.



exclusive toward Samaritan and Gentile. Certain Hellenistic cults excluded Jews. Anti-Semitism was rife. Other factors are needed to explain why Christians were racially inclusive in a world of many racial antagonisms, and these factors would have to take account of the manner in which the Church broke down other social barriers, such as those of sex and economic class. We should have to remember that the universalism of II Isaiah preceded both Stoicism and Alexander, and that it was a Galilean peasant Jew who told the story of the Good Samaritan. It seems at least possible that Paul's (?) word, "Of one blood hath God made all the nations of the earth," and Peter's (?) "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation" etc., may derive in part from the ethical insight of such prophets as these, and that the interpretation of the idea of love and God's Fatherhood by Jesus may not have been entirely neutral. Incidentally, it can hardly be said that the reason Paul "came to see that non-Jews were capable of a valid religious life" is that he was a dispersion Jew, since many dispersion Jews did not agree on this point. In fact, the dispersion Jew was often the most narrow, and it is probable that Paul's sense of being a dispersion Jew was one of the strongest factors in making him a violent leader of those who denied that any save a *gesetzgetreu* Jew could have a valid religious experience. And he remained so until he came in contact with those who were under the influence of Jesus.

At any rate, all sociological description of process which goes beyond statistical method passes into allegation or assumption of judgments, evaluations, and motives, as does Professor Riddle. Here conclusions have to do with the *why* and not merely the *how*. But no one can discuss why Christians denied racial barriers and class distinctions without appraising the content of the Christian message and its impact upon its believers. Thus any adequate criticism of so-

ciological process drives one to examine the validity of ideological content—the *what*.

2. The second fallacy of Professor Riddle's to which I would direct attention arises in part from the first error of over-simplification and its consequent confusion of religious process. It is the fallacy of trying to explain religious conduct in terms of secondary or tertiary sociological factors. It is illustrated in his first case study respecting racial inclusiveness, but is better illustrated by his discussion of early Christian pacifism. Fortunately here the case is clear, for we have numerous statements by early Christians of the reasons why Christians declined military service, and with one or two dubious exceptions they contradict Professor Riddle's thesis.

When he says that "it was by no means the humanitarian affirmation of the sacredness of human life which led early Christians to repudiate military service," the only thing which saves him from complete contradiction of these early Christians' own declarations is his use of the adjective "humanitarian." None of them would have alleged *humanitarian* motives; but they do consistently affirm that it was the sacredness of human life and especially their religious obligation to love all men, in particular, their enemies, which prevented them from engaging in war. Probably Christians would have declined military services which required practices that they considered idolatrous. But prior reasons generally precluded consideration of the fact that to be a soldier (at least to be an officer) demanded rites which were regarded as idolatrous.

In discussing this point we need to keep in mind the distinction between the problem of whether all Christians were pacifists and the dates at which pacifism arose and waned, and the problem of why those who declined military service did so. The latter is Professor Riddle's point. As to the first problem we may note in passing that



positive proof of the Christians' attitude toward participating in war is lacking prior to the early part of the second century. Such evidence as is available is surveyed by Cadoux, who concludes that up to the time of Marcus Aurelius, while a few soldiers probably remained in the armies after their conversion, Christians did not become soldiers after baptism.<sup>1</sup> But as to the reasons why Christians refused military service the case is stated clearly by Christian apologists: they declare military service to be contrary both to Christian principle and practice for the reason that it involved hating and killing. The motive stated is one of ethical religion not of cultic religion; the sin was in violating the obligation of love, not in sacrificing to Caesar. This is clear from the time of Justin, who writes: "We . . . now since the coming of Christ became sociable, and pray for our enemies and try to persuade those that hate us unjustly" (as against coercing them violently). "We who formerly slew one another not only do not make war against our enemies, but, for the sake of not telling lies or deceiving those who examine us, gladly die, professing Christ" (*Apol.* I, xiv, 3; of. xxxix, 1-3). "We, who were filled with war and mutual slaughter and every wickedness, have changed each one (our) warlike instruments throughout the whole earth—the swords into ploughshares and the spears into instruments of agriculture" (*Dialog.* 109f.). Irenaeus argues for the peaceful pursuits of Christians on the ground that killing and shedding blood are sinful (II xxxiii, 1; IV, xiii, 1; IV xxxiv, 4). Tertullian, though revealing the existence of Christians in the armies in the early third century, remarks that Christians are taught to be killed rather than to kill. And even when using the fact that some

soldiers were Christians as basis for argument, in the same passage he points out that it is unlawful for a Christian to kill (*Apol.* 37).

Tertullian is the first and so far as we know the only Christian before the fourth century who makes the point that Christians refused service because it involved "signs" and sacrifice regarded as idolatrous. And in his treatise on Idolatry he stated that even in the case of the common soldier who might be exempt from the act of offering sacrifice and passing the death sentence, military service violates the Christian profession not only because of the conflict between the *sacramentum* to Caesar with one's vow to God, but also because one cannot reconcile Christian faith with killing or the use of the sword: "How shall he wage war, nay, how shall he even be a soldier in peace time, without the sword which the Lord has taken away? . . . The Lord . . . in disarming Peter, ungirded every soldier" (*Idol.* 19; cf. *Corona* 11). With this Minucius Felix agrees: "It is not right for us to see or hear a man being killed" (XXX, 6). And Origen, who has more to say on the subject than any other writer of the first three centuries, never mentions the fact that a Christian soldier would be corrupted by idolatrous practices, but he does consider at length the fact that to be a soldier necessitated killing and on this ground alone he repudiated military service. The Lawgiver of the Christians, he says, "altogether forbade the destruction of man, teaching that the deed of daring against man on the part of his own disciples, however unrighteous that man may be, is never right; for he did not deem it becoming to his own divine legislation to allow the killing of any man whatever" (*Celsus* III, 7; cf. VII, 26).

The three most ancient "Church Orders" agree in supporting this point. The "Egyptian Church Order," both in the Latin (from Coptic) version and in the Ethiopic

<sup>1</sup>Early Church and the World, pp. 114-122, 183-190, 269-280, 399-440. Cf. for different interpretation, Moffatt in *Dict. of Christ. Antiq.* Vol. II, pp. 660f.; Bigelmair, *Die Beteiligung der Christen am öffentl. Leben u.s.w.*, pp. 110-180.



version, excludes definitely from the church any soldier or any other who "has the power of the sword." Likewise the "Hippolytean Canons" exclude soldiers and all who have power and authority to kill. Although these come to us in fourth century recensions, the more recent opinions assign their origin to early or middle third century. This accounts for the curious fact in both that alongside these absolute exclusions of Christians from the army and other positions where execution of death would be required stand clauses which absolve soldiers and others who shed blood if they are commanded to do so. It is obvious that this contradiction is due to textual alteration. And the only question is whether the more rigid or the more liberal statement is the original. To this the answer is obvious both from the textual form (which is too complicated for analysis here) and from historical circumstance. Modification toward a more absolute pacifism is impossible to imagine during the period when the Church was falling more and more under the spirit of compromise with the State, especially since the policy of the Church was stated at the Council of Arles (314) in terms exactly contrary to these "Orders," namely, that of excluding those who refused to bear arms. As these two "Orders" represent the attitude of the Egyptian and the Roman churches respectively, so "The Testament of our Lord" represents the Syrian, or perhaps the Asian churches, and it likewise instructs the Christian soldiers (i.e. those who had been converted in the army) and those in authority to choose between killing and being excluded from the Church. "Let him be taught not to oppress, or to kill, or to rob, or to be angry, or to rage and afflict any one" (II,2.). Catechumens must choose between remaining in the army and being baptised.

In all these cases, the reason given for conflict between the Christian profession

and military service, contrary to Riddle, is that the latter requires violence and killing, not that it requires idolatrous acts or oaths. But even if he were correct in holding that the conflict was merely cultic, the main problem would remain unsolved: Why did Christians choose to obey Christ rather than Caesar? And to neglect this problem is to truncate inquiry at the very point that it becomes significant for life. As Professor Riddle admits, the problem of relationship between Church and State which is involved "is quite relevant to a contemporary question of compelling importance," and at this point, to study the Bible "with reference to motivation is highly valuable." But this would take us far beyond an inquiry of social process into that of ethical principle and religious commitment—that is, into normative criticism where again we would have to face the *what* and judge its validity, or perhaps more properly be judged by it.

3. And this leads us finally to inquire whether the study of the Bible should have relevance for clarification of ethical norms and religious faith. Again if I understand Professor Riddle, he employs the principle that "the Bible is a laboratory of human experience" to justify the conclusion that one should aim to learn from his method of Bible study only how various social forces played upon each other and upon the people involved. The standpoint is strictly humanistic.

This standpoint and its consequences seem to me to neglect two important factors. The first is that there is no such thing as "human experience" which can be isolated from those prior conditioning complex facts, forces, and principles which are more than human. And these are superhuman, as they are also supernatural, at least in the sense that no man nor social group did create nor can evade them. And they are not exhausted in any description of physical nature and human decision, since they under-



lie and condition both. "Human experience" is always an interaction with that which is not human—that which is more than human. Now the most obvious thing about the human experience revealed in the Bible is that its participants, especially its effective participants—affirm a divine judgment upon all social forces and forms. The prophets from Moses to Jesus pronounce this judgment of God on all social customs, economic practices, political institutions, cultic rites and even ethical codes—and they do so even when they affirm that God's will is to be found partially in these forms.

In short, the Bible is history, which is only partially a human enterprise, for God is in history judging it as he simultaneously participates in it. No moment of history is godless as none is Godlike. For in all history there is the moving constant of crisis which arises out of the tension between God's transcendent purpose and man's stupidity, pride, and rebellion. Now it is the genius of the Bible that therein this eternal crisis is recognized. To be sure, the sociological, psychological, and ideological forms in which this crisis takes shape are continually changing, but the crisis is constant. And one must be acquainted with these human variants if he would understand the meaning of the history involved. But it is a superficial study indeed which excludes beforehand all but these changing forms. That would be like trying to account for the traffic of a city by watching its traffic signals!

The second factor is the converse of the first: When the Bible is read as an exclusively human document one must read every thing else as exclusively human. He thereby excludes God—or what is perhaps more serious, he equates man with God. If there is one idea which ties the whole Bible together and makes of a diverse and heterogeneous collection of documents a Book it

is the fact of the immediacy and inescapability of God. Amos expressed it dramatically when he said Israel's hope to escape destruction by seeking "the day of Yahweh" was "as if a man did flee from a lion and a bear met him." Turn where you will, there you meet God! History is God at work, and there is intrinsic to the process that which makes it impossible for crooked walls to stand however strongly they are built. It is not gravity which will pull them down but God! This is God's doing, and it is astonishing in the eyes of those who see it.

This is not to say that one will or should accept the interpretation of events as given by biblical writers just because biblical writers give them; nor that he will accept them at all. This is no plea for the abdication of reason nor for surrender to authoritarianism. But I cannot see how a competent teacher will allow his students to miss the point that in all history God speaks pertinently to contemporaneous problems because the matrix of all history is the creative power and purpose of God. And who can read the Bible without considering what God is trying to do in the world, and why peoples and nations—whose choices are never completely consistent with God's purposes—are broken upon the very rocks which might rescue them. Not exclusively but certainly in the Bible one is compelled to see that human experience is not alien to the cosmos but that it is the most significant manifestation of the character of the cosmos. Because this fact is more adequately articulated in the Bible than elsewhere, any rational and adequate approach to the study of the Bible will fix its center here. It will be conscious of the obligation to discover what the Bible has to say regarding the structure which underlies and informs the entire human enterprise and thus to perceive universal and abiding truths in particular and transient forms.



# College Classroom Methods in Teaching Religion

THOMAS S. KEPLER AND OTHERS

THE TEACHER of religion is conscious that his task differs from that of teaching French, chemistry, mathematics, or economics. He realizes that, since religion as a way of life is so deeply rooted in the lives of the students he teaches, he needs to guard his artistry of pedagogy with particular care. The methods of presentation, the interpretations he gives, the bibliography he suggests, the general attitude of tolerance he lends, in their respective ways add to or subtract from the effectiveness of the subject he teaches. He knows his subject can give more than objective knowledge to his classes; he is sensitive to the possibility that what his students learn through religious studies may affect their philosophies of life. Just as Goethe said in reading Winckelmann, "One becomes something," so the teacher of religion similarly hopes may be the result in each individual who enrolls in his classes. As a teacher he may be primarily concerned with presenting facts and interpretations with scholarly skill; but he is a mediocre interpreter if he does not hope that these data leave their impression in the lives of his students.

The teaching of religion offers peculiar problems not encountered in other fields of investigation; there are certain prejudices to combat, interests to arouse, attitudes to instill. At times the isolated teacher is not sure if he is using the proper methods in his work; he needs to compare his artistry and tactics with others, thus sharing in their common experiences. With such a purpose in mind, two symposia were conducted, one dealing with the teaching of the Bible,

the other concerned with the teaching of the philosophy of religion.<sup>1</sup>

The following condensed papers present the bases for the discussions that followed, relative to the teaching of religion in colleges.

## I. *Symposium on Teaching the Bible*

### 1. Isaac S. Corn, *Illinois Wesleyan University*

In the college where I serve as head of the department of Religion I give two courses in Bible regularly. The first course which is designed especially for freshmen and sophomores is frankly introductory in part and presents a sort of survey of the types of literature in the Bible. To this course I have given the title "Bible Appreciation" on the assumption that if Art Appreciation and Music Appreciation are good in their respective fields Bible Appreciation ought to be good in my field. This course has worked out well in spite of the fact that it is required of all students either in their freshmen or sophomore years. The first three weeks of this three-hour, one-semester course is given to introductory considerations of the Bible as a whole. For each of these introductory discussions one or two readings are assigned. Day after day then for these first few weeks we consider such matters as "The Bible and Civilization," "How the Bible Came to Be," "The Bible in Translation," "The Bible as an Object of Study," "The Historical Background of the Bible," "The Bible and Religious Truth," "The Bible as an Aid to Religion," etc. The idea, of course, is to acquaint the students with the Bible as a whole and to make an impression indi-

<sup>1</sup>Midwestern Branch of NABI, held at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, February 3, 1940.



rectly that shall serve to break down reserve, overcome prejudice, and put the Bible in its proper place as something to be studied in college. . . .

After these preliminary discussions of the whole Bible, which is largely a matter of orientation, I take my students into the Bible itself. There I try to acquaint them with the various types of literature to be found in it. It has occurred to me that this is the best way to introduce students to the Bible. Earlier in my teaching career I used a good textbook, beginning at the beginning and going straight through it to the end. That threw the students right at the start into the very difficult and disconcerting problems of the Pentateuch, especially Genesis. More recently I have begun with Paul's letter to Philemon as a short writing with which one can illustrate many of the aspects of the modern study of the Bible, such as the occasion for the letter, the concreteness of the circumstances out of which it arose, the humanness of the writing as well as the writer, and the way in which great and permanent religious ideas are conveyed by a writing that has much of the temporal about it. Then I take the students into I Corinthians as a very practical letter of the great apostle as he wrestled with the problems of his first-century churches. About the middle of the semester we spend about five days with the Sermon on the Mount. It does not take long for the students to see that here one becomes acquainted with the wisest Wise Man of the East and confronts some of the most challenging ideals of human character and conduct to be found anywhere. In this connection I encourage discussion and get more of it and get it more easily than in connection with any other part of the Bible. The disconcerting problems of the Pentateuch I leave until the last few days. By this time most of the class are ready for the most difficult part of the Bible and welcome some light on the solution of its problems. The last day of all I give a

lecture on "The Bible and Inspiration" in which I try to make clear in what sense we can conceive of God as helping to produce the various writings of the Bible. I find that this lecture answers a multitude of questions.

In this course I use a textbook as a concession to the immaturity of the students. I find no book quite adequate, however, and in teaching Bible Appreciation I have to supply much of the "appreciation." The Abingdon Bible Commentary is a constant reference work in this course. Furthermore, I supplement the classroom work with a list of collateral readings. During the semester each student is expected to get acquainted with the easier literature of the field by reading from seven different writers out of the fourteen I suggest, averaging two or three chapters to a reading. This is of value as helping the students to see that the instructor is not "wild" in his own ideas and methods of studying the Bible.

The second course in Bible which I offer is designed to follow the one just discussed, and is offered the second semester of each year while the first course is given each semester. Under the title "Creative Religious Literature" this course is designed to appeal to the students who desire to do further work in the Bible. It differs from the first course in that it is not so general, not so introductory, does not deal with types of literature in the Bible, but instead takes up various books as books. We begin with the Book of Job, then certain of the Prophets, then the books of Daniel and Revelation, one or two of the more difficult letters of Paul, then the Epistle to the Hebrews, ending with a view of the Synoptic Problem and one of the Gospels. At the end of the course we take a number of days with religious thought in general literature in order to show that the process of inspiration did not cease with the completion of the Bible. In this course I do not use a textbook, but from time to time give a list of readings on re-

serve in the library. The student is thus put on his own more than in the previous course which he has already taken. The idea is to teach him how to study the Bible by himself as well as to use the literature of the field.

While these two courses are the only literary courses in the Bible in my department, another course is offered that draws heavily upon the Bible. It is entitled, "Jesus and Modern Social Problems."

## 2. Charles F. Kraft, *Hamline University*

Curricularly speaking, we are the chief reason for the existence of the church-related liberal arts college. We are the curricular *raison d'être* of the liberal arts college. As such our task is tremendous.

The difficulties are equally disturbing. Some—those few who often are the most interested in the Bible, generally for vocational reasons—come with a full set of preconceived notions as to what the Bible is and "what is what" in matters of interpretation. Many, perhaps the majority, come with prejudice against Bible study in general as "Sunday-Schoolish" or "character-building" in a derogatory sense.

In the light of the peculiar significance pertaining to the work of our department and of the student difficulties just suggested, several conclusions may be noted concerning the general aim of college courses in the Bible:

1. The work is organized for the whole student body—not for an interested few. The courses must aim to reach all interests and, hence, as varied techniques as possible must be used.

2. Our emphasis is cultural and appreciative, not vocational. One of the most difficult attitudes encountered is the view that ministerial students are the only ones naturally interested in the Bible; the courses are for them; others merely need to take a certain required number of hours to gradu-

ate. As a matter of fact, ministerial students expecting to do graduate theological work should be discouraged from majoring in Bible in college. Ideally those few students who do major in the subject do so for purely cultural reasons.

3. Orientation and survey type courses should prevail, not specialization. In the college course technical problems of Old Testament and New Testament introduction have little place except as background knowledge for the teacher and perhaps research problems for unusually interested students.

4. The aim is to change students' lives, not to impart a body of information to be used as tools in the future. Yet, by all means, the courses must be scholarly, intellectually respectable and challenging. Emphasis may well be upon the literary and historical and general cultural development in, for example, a survey of the Old Testament, leaving the peculiarly religious suggestions largely assumed. Understanding the Bible as the literary product of its peculiar social-historical environment will make the religious implications clear. Examination of the process of the growth of moral ideals and of the idea of God is correctly the "guide to understanding the Bible."

The following observations as to particular techniques in course work may be made:

1. The approach to each course is of vital importance. The first few days are especially significant—not simply to sell the course to a group of students, many of whom are taking it because six hours of Bible is required, but to set up certain fundamental attitudes toward the Bible. If possible, one may well initiate a discussion on the students' view of the nature of the Bible and its relation to modern life. Find out what the students' mind-sets are with reference to the course—what they expect and want. I generally suggest or require read-



ing such a book as Fosdick's *Modern Use of the Bible*.

2. Emphasize reading the Bible itself, not simply about the Bible.

3. Modern speech translation of the Bible is a superb device for attracting student attention and holding interest.

4. The use of contemporary idiom and reference both enlivens and enriches Biblical history for the collegiate mind almost entirely engrossed in present-day world affairs. Perhaps it is dangerous to substitute for Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria the names of the Allies, Germany, and Russia. Perhaps it is an anachronistic blunder to compare Israel with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other minor buffer states caught between larger powers. But the drama of history becomes sun-clear, and the statesman-prophet Isaiah takes on a new meaning in the light of world events familiar to the student.

5. A wealth of supplementary materials—often local—is available for enhancing Bible study. Present-day Palestine—frequently in headline news—forms a good starting point for capturing student interest, which may be aided by the use of articles and pictures of the Near East such as those in the December, 1938 issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*. Archaeological finds are invaluable aids.

6. As it is the peculiar interest of courses in the Bible to be concerned primarily with personalities, ancient and modern, one of the most invaluable techniques in such studies is to seek, never to lose, personal touch with the student. I have never felt it a loss of time to digress from the subject in hand for the discussion of any questions, often of a religious nature, raised by students in the classroom.

A final word! Though our job is attended with unusual and great obstacles due to the peculiar materialistic and practical emphasis of our age and the prevalent prejudice against matters of the unseen, we do well never to be discouraged by lack of

tangible results. For we are engaged in the great and ultimately significant business of enriching youthful personalities by introducing them to the great personalities of religious history whose origin was yesterday but whose life is eternal!

## II. *Symposium on Teaching of Philosophy of Religion*

1. Arthur C. Wickenden, *Miami University*.

The course as now being offered by the writer begins with a discussion of the sources of the primary religious beliefs of young people, the method of their acquisition, and the circumstances which lead to their modification. In this connection the question of the desirability of independent thinking in matters of religious faith is faced. The next step is consideration of the motives which move people to continue their devotion to religion and account is taken of popular and inadequate motives as well as the more adequate ones. Several sessions are given to consideration of the nature and functions of religion, followed immediately by a discussion of the relative functions of religion and science. A little time is given to the nature of faith and more specifically religious faith after which the various affirmations of the Christian faith receive attention in turn. Some of the questions discussed are: "Is the Bible the Word of God?" "How Shall We Think of God?" "What are the serious obstacles to affirmative faith in God?" and "What are the more important arguments justifying faith in God?" Next Jesus Christ is considered both in his relation to God and to men, followed by a discussion of the nature of sin and its consequences. The subject of Prayer receives attention, as does the Case for Immortality. Attention is given to the functions of the church with particular consideration to worship and the relation of the church to living social and economic interests. Finally some consideration is given

en to the threat to religion from pseudo-religions, that is, from the new ideologies that are claiming the supreme devotion of men in many parts of the world.

Without any attempt to be exhaustive, may I suggest certain objectives which will help to determine the best methods. In the first place, the course should enable students to gain an intelligent understanding of their own religious traditions, those in which they have been born and reared.

A second objective would be that of subjecting these traditions to critical evaluation in order to bring out their points of strength and weakness.

How may we achieve such ends? It is my judgment that the best method is that of guided discussion, supplemented by a fairly wide range of reading. By "guided" discussion I do not mean any impairment of freedom, except to see that the discussion does not become personal and that it does not wander too far afield from the problem being faced.

With respect to the first objective, that of helping students to an understanding of their inherited traditions, I should not lecture, but rather draw it out of the students themselves. It is better to draw it out of them bit by bit, one student contributing one item and another another, and then fit the bits together like pieces of a jig-saw puzzle into a consistent whole.

While in the process of getting a particular position stated positively, it is well not to let the critics of it interrupt with their criticisms. Secure a full-rounded statement first and then invite criticisms of the view stated. Let the students attack each other's positions. The instructor may help a student to point up his criticism or to state it effectively, but in this process he should be the friend and helper of all sides of the argument. Students will accept the criticisms of their fellow students with better grace than they will those coming direct from the

professor, and they will be impressed when they find opposing points of view in their own midst.

In the midst of such discussion when the professor is first lending assistance to one side of the debate and then another, frequently he will be asked, "Professor, what do you believe about this matter?" He may justifiably postpone answering that question until all points of view have been expressed. When that has been done, he may very properly state his own position and his reasons for holding it. He must not be guilty, however, of speaking disrespectfully of or minimizing positions which he rejects which are affirmed by others whose intelligence is entitled to respect.

In such a course in which discussion is used as the principal method should a text be used? Like my colleague in this symposium, having produced a text, naturally I should be expected to commend the use of a text. I do with reservations. If the use of a text means slavery to the text, then better do without. If instead of free discussion the class period degenerates into mere reciting of the content of the textbook to be forthwith forgotten until examination time, and then with the aid of concentrated cramming recalled long enough to be inscribed on paper and then forever relinquished, then little education is taking place and the course will fall far short of the objectives named. But if you are to conduct the course without a text you will need abundant library resources in the way of reference readings. There must be available not only a wide choice of books but a sufficient number of copies of the books of greatest usage to supply the demand. Few of us enjoy such abundant facilities. There is an advantage also in having one source which all read in common, provided that variety is encouraged in the collateral readings. The one danger is that parrot-like repetition shall take the place of thinking through the implications of a particular position.



2. Horace T. Hbuf, *Ohio University*

There is always a functional and organic relation between the chief purposes in teaching a subject and the main procedures effectual toward realizing them. For example, if the central purpose is edificational or devotional, the procedures will be different than if the main object is interpretative or philosophical. As part of their course, some teachers introduce their students to the several varieties of religion to be found in this country, and then arrange for members of their class to visit meetings conducted by selected religious groups so as to observe them sympathetically and firsthand. This method has been used with groups at Northwestern University and Antioch College, and elsewhere. In communities where it can be done, it clearly has substantial value. With some classes where students are fairly mature and the number not too large, the selection of topics by individual students and the doing of considerable undergraduate "research" by them has been tried. This has been done with substantial success at Mount Holyoke College, and elsewhere. Some whole courses have been built upon the "life-situation" plan; and numerous teachers have their groups follow the project procedure. Still other significant methods will occur to persons at work in this field. These illustrate some which have been reported in print.

Among the factors which influence both content and method in this subject will be such things as the type of college or institution, the personnel of the student body served, the objectives chiefly sought, and the interests and philosophy of the teacher.

The more advanced course at Ohio University is called "Philosophy of Religion." It was planned for upper-classmen, and no one may elect it who has not had six hours of previous work in philosophy and religion. The membership seldom numbers over a dozen, and procedures are largely deter-

mined by that. The number and relative maturity of the students permits an easy freedom, much discussion, and considerable guided supplemental reading. Recently, in this course, we have required the students to work thoroughly through Wright's *Student's Philosophy of Religion*. This is done by assignments and periodic tests for check-up. With steady progress in the text-book required, the class periods naturally and easily become times for discussion or socialized recitation, and for lecturing when that is desirable. Supplemental procedures, such as individual "research" on topics particularly interesting to given persons, and the visitation of religious institutions, fit in well in this course; and time can be arranged for such.

However, several years ago we learned that only a few students will elect a substantial three-hour course in this field. Various pressures well-known to all of us make that unfortunate fact increasingly true. So we decided to experiment with a briefer survey and service course to be called "Problems of Religion." It was planned primarily for underclassmen, and pitched at about the sophomore level. The course is catalogued as a one- or two-hour course, and is more often given as the former. This fact enforces serious limitations inevitably, but there are substantial offsetting values which keep us giving the course. It enlists considerable numbers of underclassmen while their unspoiled interest in religion still carries over from their homes and churches, and it enables us to reach them before they get into the toils of their major and minor subjects and of their possessive faculty advisers.

During the ten past semesters we have had 380 students in this course, an average of thirty-eight each semester. Of this total 188 were freshmen, 77 were sophomores, 70 were juniors, and 42 were seniors.

One of our chief aims has been to ascertain what are the problems in this area as

(Concluded on page 228)

# Biography in Religious Education

KATHARINE HAZELTINE PATON

*"The God of life reveals Himself in the midst of life itself"*

IT HAS always seemed that this arresting statement of Kagawa sums up the reasons for my deep conviction that any well-rounded curriculum of religious education, whether for college or secondary school, should include a course in biography.

I am well aware that I am not the first nor the only person of such conviction. It is not to offer something original or new that I present the views in this paper. It is to bring to your remembrance the great values of such a course, particularly at the present time. For it is a time to dwell upon the abiding significance of lives in which the divine presence has made itself effective in the world. Is not one of the great imperatives of today the acquisition of perspective in our views of life, and of values by which to live? A study of those "truly dedicated spirits," "obedient to the heavenly vision," will make us "aware of greatness passing by" and bring poise and courage.

To begin with, certain requisites in planning the course should be considered. First of these—possibly obvious, but very important—is that it must be adapted to a particular group, and be planned with reference to the previous training; intellectual and spiritual maturity; diversity of religious, economic and social backgrounds; personal concerns and interests, or individual needs. To be effective it must be their very own course, not an ideal course. Knowledge of their previous reading of biography would prevent unfortunate repetition of subject

matter, while consultation with the class would develop a spirit of co-operation in the adventure into life, which such a course may truly become. Thus, it would seem wise in planning a course not to plan in too great detail in advance, even "if making it up as you go along" seems a rather casual procedure.

The second requisite in planning for the course for a particular group is that there should be some central theme to give it unity, even if that unity should eventually prove to be the diversity of life. In the department of religious education such a course would *ipso facto* have a religious theme. "Religious" might be, indeed, should be broadly interpreted. For example there are Fred Eastman's *Men of Power* series,<sup>1</sup> in which the secret of power in each individual presented seems the binding theme, or Eloise Lounsberry's *Saints and Rebels*,<sup>2</sup> which contains the stories of twelve "who cherished the gods by cherishing the unfortunate and the underprivileged." Joseph Cotter's *Champions of Democracy*,<sup>3</sup> and Allan Seager's *They Worked for a Better World*<sup>4</sup> reveal by their titles the theme illustrated. The latter volume discusses Roger Williams, Thomas Paine, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Elizabeth Cody Stanton and Edward Bellamy. The danger is, however, that the course become one-sided, which life certainly is not, or that it acquire a "propagandist" note, which would be unfortunate. In a church school curriculum there would be distinct advantage in acquainting a group with the careers and ideas of its early heroes and great personalities, if this were not the only course in biography to be given, but one of a series in which other courses had wider scope. There is a great deal to be said in following

<sup>1</sup>Cokesbury Press, Nashville.

<sup>2</sup>Longmans Green, New York, 1937.

<sup>3</sup>Little Brown, Boston, 1936.

<sup>4</sup>New York, Macmillan, 1939.



a course on the life of Jesus with a course in biography, in which it can be demonstrated how in all the ages since Jesus men and women have taken his gospel seriously and lived it adventurously. The clarity with which the inner religious life may be seen in its creative power both in the individual subject of the biography and in the experience of those who caught his vision and followed him would seem to be the final criterion of selection.

This leads directly to what is considered the third requisite. The experience of the subjects chosen must be near enough to that of the group so that it may be fairly easily interpreted. The class ought not to be put off by too marked "otherness," so that the subjects seem too remote or like beings of another clay. For this reason in a *first* course in biography, particularly in secondary school, it would seem wise to omit most of the great figures of Old Testament times, Paul, too, the apostolic or sub-apostolic fathers, and the great saints of the middle ages. It would be of major importance for the group to realize that God's revelation of Himself is not at an end, but that the "God of life reveals himself in the midst of life itself" even down to our own day.

In addition to this, in regard to these ancient worthies we ought to ask whether we have really adequate sources for a biography in the modern understanding of the term and whether, in order to gain vitality for our subject we might not allow the imagination too free a hand in our discussion. For the mediaeval saints, as well as perhaps some of the Old Testament figures—I am thinking in particular of Jacob—ethical questions arise which can not be resolved for all sorts of reasons, chief of which is the ignorance of even advanced students of the moods and attitudes toward their subjects of the writers of those ancient documents, which are our only sources. The story of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary is a

conspicuous illustration. A miracle saves the life of the saint by creating truth out of her lie. Though apparently spoken in a good cause, it still might be said by those of a psychological turn of thought, that her fears were chief responsible for her speech; and others would point out that pure goodness is seldom in real life saved from peril by a miracle simply because it is goodness. Ethical discussion of these nice points on the evidence in hand would land a class neatly in a morass of moral and ethical lummocks from which leaping to high ground would be difficult.

The fourth requisite is closely allied to the third. There should be a minimum of moralizing. The moral values must be inherent in the action and in the tense balancing of the forces which swayed life now in this direction, now that; in the conflict of motives to the action. The moral and spiritual victory must be clear without too much, better without any, "preachment" on the leader's part. If we see the subject "in the round," the faults as well as virtues, the weakness as well as the strength, the obstacles faced and surmounted, the mistakes and the failures, the problems and perplexities, then, without words, we enter with understanding sympathy into the experience of another, knowing both his bitterness and his sweetness, and are ourselves made the greater, because for a little, we have lived with his greatness. On the whole the subject selected should be on the "good" side rather than the "bad," to use two overworked and badly abused categories, or better, of a constructive or creative type rather than the opposite. For younger students this would be particularly important, though the older students would no doubt find valuable a discussion of such persons as Gamaliel Bradford treated in *Damaged Souls*.

The fifth and final requisite in planning the course concerns itself with the books to be used. It is that single volumes con-

taining a series of biographical studies designed for young people are to be avoided. The principal reason for discarding these "anthologies" is this: that the narratives are so concise (in order, no doubt, to bring the whole within the compass of a single volume) that all the precious life blood has been drained out. Here are only fossil remains. To revive the dry bones one must have recourse to the set of references to the authoritative biographies and autobiographies, usually appended. Why not begin with these then? It is imperative that the subject live again before the eyes of the class. All the personal details, and all the knowledge of the ideas of the times in which he lived as well as his reactions to them are essential. A further and equally valid reason for abandoning the "anthologies" is that each sketch is written to illustrate the central theme of the series. To underscore this point some material is over emphasized, other material is omitted, with the result that the portrait is out of focus. Hence it would seem wiser to draw directly upon the best sources available, autobiographical if possible. This procedure would naturally limit the number of persons to be discussed during a given year, and the limitations of the number of times per week which a class can meet would limit the number still further. However, this limitation does bring rewarding results. The class becomes interested in the qualities incarnate in the lives of individuals, and in the ideas which come to effectiveness in this fashion, so that the importance of creative and adventurous living is emphasized. The more detailed knowledge makes for greater reality and more adequate understanding. It should go without saying that the biographies should be well-written, in accord with the highest standards of literary excellence in this field. That should not need emphasis.

So much, then, for the preliminary considerations. The remainder of this paper

will deal with certain of the values which biography has for religious education.

The first of these is that biography presents youth its own problems objectively, particularly two:—their own religious quest and perplexity, and their choice of vocation.

This value of objectivity can hardly be over-emphasized. In terms that can be understood, life, not theory comes before us. This objective impersonal discussion of some one else's problems is invaluable to young people who are still rather shy in the presence of their own best thoughts, or who are reluctant to drag out for the cool regard of their rather intolerant contemporaries their deepest convictions. They dread ridicule; but they dread equally being thought better than they are, or being considered models, knowing how far they fall short of their own ideals. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Two illustrations must suffice.

The narrative of Elizabeth Fry's decision (she was Betsey Gurney then, a girl of seventeen), to become a "plain Friend" opened up easily and naturally these fundamental questions of religious experience. Betsey Gurney's honesty with herself in her journal of long ago helped my class to face honestly their own questions—her reluctance to be religious, her dread of being different and queer, her difficulty in giving up the pleasures of music, dancing, cards, and dress, her fear of being carried to excesses of enthusiasm which might lead her to actions which she did not really wish to do, the inability at first to find God in her own life as a reality. In discussing all these questions in the experience of Betsey Gurney, their own experience was interpreted to them. They began to ask very naturally their own questions and we entered into one of the best discussions of the winter. Her being a Quaker led to a discussion of Friends' beliefs and a comparison of these with the views of other religious groups. We centered down on the



central facts of religious experience in general, of what was involved in worship, of how our willingness to do, and our actually doing, the will of God would lead us on to further understanding of him. We began to see how we were made into "inward beings with an active ethic,"<sup>5</sup> and how "by placing ourselves in the service of that which lives, we reach an activity, exerted upon the world, which has meaning and purpose."<sup>6</sup> Finally, as we traced her career to its close we could see the results of her dedication of spirit.<sup>7</sup>

As regards the choice of vocation, I think it was Albert Schweitzer's which was most impressive. He could not take for granted his own comfort, happiness, and advantage.<sup>8</sup> Comparison of his own experience as a pastor's son with that of the other boys and girls of the town brought the sharpest of contrasts. Had he done anything himself then to deserve this? Had his young friends brought upon themselves the handicaps of poverty, and lack of opportunity? So questioning he was led to the conviction that for all his happiness he must give something in return. At the time of this decision he was not clear what the character of such service would be. "It might be inconspicuous, but it must be direct human service."<sup>9</sup> Circumstances would guide him in his final choice. He would live for his art and his scholarship until he was thirty. Then he would serve humanity directly. Schweitzer's originality is shown by the fact that at the age of thirty he executed his resolution of age twenty-one. His clear dispassionate analysis gives some most helpful advice in

this question of life service. He is careful to describe those who should not follow his example: those who want to do something special out of a spirit of restlessness, or who want to dedicate themselves to large tasks because those nearest are not satisfying. "Only those who feel that they can find value in every sort of activity and devote themselves to each one with full consciousness of duty have an inward right to choose extraordinary activity,"<sup>10</sup> while of those who do feel the impulse and are fitted to devote their lives to independent personal activity the majority are compelled to renounce such a course in order to care for those dependent on them, or to earn their own living. "Yet no one finds himself in the position of having no possible opportunity for giving himself to others as a human being."<sup>11</sup> "The hidden forces of goodness are embodied in those persons who carry on as a secondary pursuit the immediate personal service which they cannot make their life work."<sup>12</sup> "That everyone shall exert himself in that state of life in which he is placed to practice true humanity towards his fellow-man, on that depends the future of mankind."<sup>13</sup>

I have been at some pains to present this experience of Schweitzer's in detail for it illustrates the combination of idealism and practicality necessary in choosing one's way of life, especially if it is to be religiously motivated. His was so clearly set forth and so modern an example of what has been true of genuine prophetic experience in every age:<sup>10</sup> a realization of the divine presence and activity;<sup>11</sup> a new idea born of that realization;<sup>12</sup> a creative experience embodying this idea for the individual concerned, and the fructifying results for society because of it. In discussing it with the class it was possible to set forth certain principles, therefore, which they should need to consider in the choice of their own life work.

The second great value of biography in religious education is that it shows through

<sup>5</sup>Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought*, p. 265.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>7</sup>Whitney, *Elizabeth Fry*.

<sup>8</sup>Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought*, ch. IX.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

the experience of others the problems and needs of society.

Through the eyes of the men and women chosen as the subjects of our course we looked out on life. We saw how each made answer to the world's needs, and sought to realize his hope for society in his own action. This naturally, of course, further aids youth in choosing a vocation. We were careful to guard against any idea of mere imitation of their ways, by pointing out how perennial problems somewhat changed their aspect and emphasis, with the passing of years.

Let me illustrate: We began with the story of St. Francis of Assisi, and came face to face with the problem of poverty and personal possessions. His abandonment of his possessions, and his claim to wealth, with his espousal of Lady Poverty in literal obedience to the gospel demands put the issue bluntly before us. What shall we do with our possessions? Are they a hindrance? When others have not sufficient and we have more than enough, what then? Especially if we are all children of God, and members one of another? We followed St. Francis' answer to these queries with care. What should be our answer? We kept the problem before us in one form or another throughout our course. In taking up the career of Jane Addams next, we saw how she met the issue by utilizing her whole fortune to the creating of Hull House and its good-neighborly services, and when we saw through Kagawa's eyes the slums of Japan we returned to our own problem. Where St. Francis was constant to alleviate poverty, Kagawa was not satisfied with mere alleviation but set out to find its causes and eradicate them. Conditions in the slums of Shinkawa and of any large industrial city are the same. Their causes are the same:—our present acquisitive industrialized society. The remedies are the same in Japan as here:—the substitution of coöperative endeavor for the competitive. The story of Kagawa's coöperatives introduced a discus-

sion of the coöperative movements in America to the girls, to most of whom they were a completely new type and a most stimulating principle.

On this point also much was said about various modern personal efforts to deal with poverty. The work of Dorothy Day and her House of Hospitality and the Farming Commune illustrated graphically the Third Order of the Franciscans—and was of even more compelling interest than the 13th century order. A Pendle Hill pamphlet on functional poverty by Mildred Young was valuable in pressing home the urgency of a decision for personally taking some constructive action in regard to this issue of our possessions and privileges against the background of the dispossessed and underprivileged.

When we discussed Jane Addams we naturally discussed Hull House and what it stood for in the Chicago of those last years of the nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth. We were careful to point out that the social problems which pressed for solution in those days were not necessarily those of our own, but as we followed the experiences of Jane Addams, Ellen Starr, Julia Lathrop, and Florence Kelley we realized that we must take up their activity at the point where they left off, and where we now are. We saw the problems they discovered. Their social studies opened the girls' eyes to our own day.

In 1889 when Hull House was opened there were no "social workers;" now this is a trained profession. There was no department of sociology in an American University; the first was opened in 1892 in the new University of Chicago. There was no factory legislation; no child-labor legislation; no recognition of the rights of labor to collective bargaining; no unions for women (except of bookbinders); no control of sweat-shops; no play grounds for children (the first was opened in 1892); no public parks for recreation; no juvenile



court; no organized bureau of charities, no consumer's league, etc. The first campaign for a pure milk supply did not come until 1898. There were no day nurseries, no visiting nurse associations, no place for public discussions of economic and social issues. There was lack of security for old age, and constant fear of the poor house. The discussion about the social gospel was just beginning. The churches were just awakening to their social responsibilities.

When we made such a list as this, and realized the part played by Hull House and other social settlements in correcting such conditions, two questions were raised at once: what is happening today? Do these problems persist? Just at this juncture the *Atlantic Monthly*<sup>14</sup> appeared with an article about Charlotte Carr, Jane Addams' successor at Hull House, with a brief statement of her plans for the usefulness of Hull House in the present social conflicts. She is quoted as saying that enlightened organization among industrial workers is a modern bulwark of the democracy to which she is wholly devoted. But first she insists workers must be educated in democracy if they are to save their organizations from exploitation.<sup>15</sup> "The settlement house is dead; that's as it should be. The very job of the settlement," she says, "is to keep putting itself out of business. It can't cure the ills of society, but it can point the way. As the public awakens to the settlements' example, public agencies absorb its functions. Then the settlement writes the past off the books and moves on to new frontiers."<sup>16</sup> We saw this happening in the forty years of Jane Addams at Hull House. "The new frontiers of Hull House are two—the first, Charlotte Carr believes, is adult education. . . . The new classrooms are filled with workers of the lowest wage groups studying labor-

law and collective bargaining. As long as workers are going to organize, they might as well organize intelligently and democratically. The second frontier is the elimination of nationalistic barriers and racial lines. To this end she is developing a sense of unity and community for the Negroes, Mexicans, Italians and Poles along neighborhood lines."<sup>17</sup>

What we saw through the eyes of these two persons has been described rather at length with the view to making convincing my statement that the use of biography can enlarge experience and present the social problems with which we must deal. In the work of Elizabeth Fry prison conditions and prison reform in England were described. What of our own day, they asked? In the careers of Booker T. Washington and James Weldon Johnson the problem of race relations, and racial attitudes came up; the unequal economic conditions; the inequality of educational opportunity; discrimination against negroes in other ways, especially in opportunity for medical facilities, and the anti-lynching bill were touched upon.

Thus it was that through the eyes and within the experience of others we could see the needs of the world. Windows upon life were thrown open before them, not "magic casements opening on the foam of faery seas," but windows of clear glass looking out upon reality.

The third value of a study of biography will not need such detailed discussion, for the illustrations already offered on the first two counts will serve to prove this point also. It is that a study of biography deepens their understanding of others of dissimilar race or background, and thereby enriches life. First of all there would frequently be aroused an interest in biography for its own sake, out of a sense of unity with all sorts and conditions of men. Second, such study would make it impossible for them to be "desensitized to the whole of life."<sup>18</sup> A third result should be that never

<sup>14</sup>M. S. Mayer, "Charlotte Carr—Settlement Lady," *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1938.

<sup>15</sup>Mayer, *op. cit.*, p. 744.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 747; <sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 748.

<sup>18</sup>M. L. Wilson, *Democracy Has Roots*, p. 46.

again could they have a preconceived or rigid pattern of what it means to be religious, to which they will make everyone conform, but they will have become more wisely tolerant, humble, and coöperative. They will never again think of religion as only an inner and purely personal matter involving only a future salvation, and will feel even more urgent the compulsion to express a sense of community both in life and in worship. They will have seen something, too, of the revolutionary character of God's enterprise.

This statement of the values to be derived from a study of biographies does not exhaust the list, but it must suffice, as suggestive only of many more; and the paper must be brought to its conclusion. Masefield's lines suggest the personal challenge of the year's course:

Adventure on, companion, for this  
Is God's most greatest gift, the thing that is.  
Take it, although it lead to the abyss.

\* \* \*

Adventure on, for from the littlest clue  
Has come what ever worth man ever knew;  
The next to lighten all men, may be you.

Adventure on, and if you suffer, swear  
That the next venturer shall have less to  
bear;  
Your way will be retrodden, make it fair.

Think, though you thunder on in might, in  
pride,  
Others may follow fainting, without guide,  
Burn out a trackway for them; blaze it  
wide.

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# A Student Bible Study Group

RUTH JOHNSON

IN THE LAST few years there has certainly been a marked increase in the study of the Bible among groups of students everywhere throughout the world that the influence of the World Student Christian Federation can be said to have reached. Many campuses here in America are seeking to give a more prominent place to the study of the Bible in their religious activities. As a student who spent her junior year of college abroad and her senior year on the campus of Smith College, I am able to tell you a little about the study of the Bible among students that I knew abroad and about one repercussion of this world movement in an American student group.

If I should take you with me to four places in which I had an opportunity of studying the Bible with students in foreign countries I think you would understand quite clearly the origins and purposes of our little group at Smith. I shall begin therefore by taking you to Goldern, Switzerland, where the World's Student Christian Federation Conference of 1938 is in session. Resting on chairs and on the grass, in an informal circle, we are studying the Bible in one of the most beautiful environments that I have ever known, the side of a hill overlooking a deep Alpine Valley and facing the snowy peaks above the Rosenlaur glacier. Our leader is a French theologian who has since felt it his duty to take up arms for his country. He is carefully going over each verse of the passage in John which we are studying, helping us to understand a little of the background known generally only to the true scholar and at the same time drawing us into a discussion of the deeper meanings of the lines. There are fifteen or twenty members of this group, among them a New Zealander studying at the Sorbonne, a young teacher at a mission school in

Transjordan, a French boy and girl from Strassburg, an English pastor, an Australian student and a Latvian. We are all studying in French and, despite occasional passionate outbursts into English when the difficulties of the French tongue cramp too much the expression of our convictions (if we are not French), we manage pretty well to make ourselves understood. To many of us who have not been to a World Student Christian Federation Conference before, never has the Bible seemed so worth careful study and so provocative of thought. We are discovering the common bond of Christian truth and fellowship.

Our scene changes to Paris where we are joining a group of French students. They are assembled for their weekly meeting in a second floor apartment of the little Rue Jean de Beauvas just behind the Sorbonne. A raucously gay crowd they are, indeed, all milling about in the small hallway so that they can shout "Bonjours" to late arrivals and compare news of the week's events, while their Président and Présidente, shouting loudest of all, try to corral them into little groups of ten to fifteen for study. Withdrawing into separate rooms, each group after a brief prayer plunges into an hour and a half's study of this week's passage in Acts. Most everyone has brought with him a printed list of questions prepared ahead of time by the leaders. He has studied the passage and can enter readily into the discussion. Over the pages of our common source-book the numerous foreign students grow to understand and to feel themselves a part of the French group. After the meeting is over all the students come together to sing without aid of a piano hymns from the Cantate Domine of the Federation, to re-read the passage studied, and for prayer. The meaning for us of this group you would



know if you stayed for our very gay but simple repast and heard the jesting and singing at table. You would better understand the quality of our fellowship if you knew how this group was to be held together even though soon to be scattered all over France, some members even as far as Bulgaria and America.

Amsterdam is a more familiar place to you. Though the meeting at Amsterdam was not a student conference, one of the four main organizations represented was the World's Student Christian Federation. As probably all my readers know, Bible Study occupied a very important place in the conference program. On the six days of the ten we had a period of Bible Study based on the theme of the day. Come with me to my group, not really so very different from that at Goldern. Instead of the out-of-doors, a school classroom serves as our meeting place. The group is larger, having thirty members, and a greater number of countries is represented, among them Indo-China and South Africa. There are students, but many of our members are ministers, churchworkers, delegates from the Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A. Also very few of us are troubled by a language difficulty, since the meeting is conducted in English, the one language we all speak. This is our last session. Our leader opens as usual with a prayer and a period of silence. Our discussion then follows, based on the questions which have been prepared in advance. Naturally the passages selected have been chosen because they are very basic to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes we get into difficulties, we wander too far away from the text or we begin expressing our long held convictions instead of putting all our thought to the burning test of the Bible. Yet, and especially since we can now look back on a week of study together and informal discussion between times, we realize how rich is the experience of sharing the messages which the Bible has brought to each of us

and of finding that there really is just one message after all.

<sup>1</sup>Study I: "As One Having Authority" (Mk. I. 14-28).

Themes for the day—Our Different Backgrounds, and Our Common Calling—and Jesus is Lord.

Study II: "Despised and Rejected of Men" (Mk. VIII 27-37).

Theme for the day—The Christian in a World of Conflict.

Study III: "Children of Your Father" (Lk. XV 11-32).

Theme: "Can Men be Brothers?"

Study IV: "Not by Bread Alone" (Lk. XIII 22-34).

Theme: "Our Daily Bread—and the Christian Community, and the World of Nations.

Study V: "Members of One Body" (Acts IV 1-35).

Theme: The Body of Christ, His Church.

Study VI: "Witnesses Unto Me" (II Cor. V. 14 to VI 10).

Theme: The Christian as Ambassador.

And, lastly, I take you for a brief visit to Nunspeet, Holland, to a camp not so very far from the Zuyder Zee. Here the students who have been at Amsterdam are meeting for their conference. Here, between cups of tea and coffee and huge cookies, served to us out-of-doors, we walk and talk along these flat spaces covered with heather and we attend meetings in the assembly hall, like any assembly hall at any camp. The series of these meetings which most interests us is that on "Jeremiah." Miss Suzanne de Dietrich is leading the study. Talking to us rather than discussing the material with us, she is covering such a large field and has so much to say that we do not mind sitting back and listening for a while. A very mixed group of students whose horizons have already been broadened by the international and interdenominational experience of Amsterdam, we are extending them farther, into the past; and we feel the hand of God through history as we read the words of Jeremiah to a people whose situation had so very much in common with our own. Having concentrated on the New Testament at Amsterdam, we now understand how rich a resource the Old Testament can be. Prob-

ably, with war clouds on the horizon and war already existing at this time, the summer of 1939, this study means more to our European friends than it does to us.

Extended as this review of various Bible Study experiences with students of other parts of the world appears, it will help my readers to understand our Bible Study group at Smith. At Goldern, Paris, and in Holland, Bible study had brought different denominations and nations together in their understanding of Christianity. And it had done so by making these students search for and find the rockbottom of their faith. It had brought them face to face with the questions which the Bible asks and they had had to answer "Yes" or "No." For Europeans, Japanese, and Chinese, war and threatened war had given them a pressing sense of need for such grounding in their faith. It seemed inevitable that the search should sweep westward, that American students should come to a closer understanding of their European and Eastern neighbors through Bible study, and should strengthen themselves spiritually against the day of testing and suffering. It seemed inevitable that such a day would come and with it a profounder search of the Bible.

However, an American college is not the easiest place in which to start such a group. Our student interests are so many and varied that the time required for preparation and study for such a group is lacking.

Trying to make our study at Smith as valuable as possible, we followed four basic principles: 1. All members of a study group should have the time to do individual preparatory study. At best they should be provided with several translations of the Bible and commentaries. 2. The study should be conducted in a spirit of worship. With a brief service of worship preceding the study, students should be prepared to let the Bible speak to them. 3. The discussion, though directed, should be free enough to allow the Bible really to be the leader. 4. The study

should not be just another course in the college curriculum, but a fellowship in which Christian truths could be experienced and Christian ideals worked out. We always tried to have supper together and to prepare it ourselves.

Our first step was to meet as a small group of six, including Miss Teresina Rowell of our religion department, for a weekend at an Outing Club cabin just outside of Northampton. Autumn leaves were very brilliant on the Saturday when by bicycle and by car we arrived at our hill-top destination. Our program started with a brief service and then we separated for an hour of quiet study of the passage John 12:20-13:20.

We ate supper around the fire and then by the light of that same fire and a lantern or two, we discussed until midnight trying to discover the message of that passage. It proved so rich in thought that we had to defer the end of the discussion to Sunday morning. This weekend gave us an opportunity to discover the rich experience of Bible Study in a group and the precious friendship which can grow out of it.

Almost every Friday thereafter we met again. We were extremely fortunate in being able to turn to Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers for the use of their lovely home and hearth (not to mention their kitchen) and also to Miss Teresina Rowell's little cottage, not so conveniently located, but with an inspiring view of Mount Tom and an atmosphere of simplicity such that it always challenged us when we read Jesus' absolute commands. The nucleus remained faithful and we had other recruits. We studied the book of "Luke" throughout the year. During the week two or three of our members made out question sheets on the next week's passage and these were delivered by bicycle post to all our houses. Meeting at six for supper we would start our study about seven o'clock by a short worship service with a reading of the passage. The study was most successful when we had time for a



period of silence before our discussion. Different members of the group led the worship and the discussion. At first we went very slowly, taking only small parts of a chapter at a time. Later on, as we felt that we were repeating and not going to be able to cover some of the most important passages, we took whole chapters, selecting the most significant part for study. A short service closed the evening unless the discussion had proved so interesting that we could not stop.

To evaluate the results of this experiment is indeed difficult. Perhaps the reasons for the interest of the group in this experiment will guide us to a comprehension of its worth. These were mainly three. There were those persons who because of conviction and experience were looking for a group of others like themselves with whom they could study and seek to practice the Chris-

tianity they professed. There were those who were searching very deeply for conviction and found in this group a real opportunity to get at basic realities. And there were those who, having student friends in Europe, felt that through this group they could be in fellowship with them in some small measure. Such a study group cannot have appeal for all students interested in religious activities. It demands a lot of time if it is to be truly satisfying. I believe, however, that our experiment, perhaps a unique one and not readily adaptable to every campus, was the fulfillment of a purpose which, if not now, must soon be realized to be essential to every college religious program. Bible Study in some form or other is bound to grow in our American colleges and universities as Christian students are more and more faced with the increasing seriousness of decisions in this world of today.

### Contributors' Column

*(Continued from page 178)*

HORACE T. HOUF is Professor of Philosophy in Ohio University. Professor Houf served eight years in the pastorate, and was for five years President of Rio Grande College. He has been twelve years in his present position, and is the author of two books and numerous articles.

KATHARINE HAZELTINE PATON, B. A. Wellesley College; B. D. Hartford Theological Seminary, is at present teaching classes in English and Religious Education at the Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Penna. and also adult classes under the direction of the Religious Education Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends. She has taught both in college and in secondary school;—before her marriage, at Mount Holyoke and Vassar; and after her hus-

band's death, at Bryn Mawr and Wellesley as a substitute for absentee professors. Her earliest teaching was English in the high schools of Montclair, N. J., and Hartford Conn. A year at the Hartford Theological Seminary as Assistant Professor of Old Testament gave her another variety of experience. She has continued her studies leading to the Ph. D., and is at present at work on her thesis.

RUTH JOHNSON was graduated last June from Smith College, where she majored in history. She spent her junior year in France with the Smith group. She traveled in Europe during the summers both before and after her winter of study in Dijon and Paris and was thus able to attend the conferences described in her article. Returning to Smith she was active in the Christian Association work, especially in relating it to the Student Christian Movement in this country and abroad.

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## DISCUSSION

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### "Why Study the Bible Today?"

*To the Editor:*

Professor Riddle's article, "Why Study the Bible Today?" deserves a deal of thought. He has had the courage to speak out in meeting and has, to become vulgar for the moment, "said a mouthful." While I might prefer to phrase a few points differently—I have not been able to convince myself that the so-called "sociological approach" is the one key which will fit all locks, and I heartily dislike its concomitant jargon—I find myself in complete sympathy with what seems to me his thesis. The sooner we professional students of biblical history have sense enough to emphasize to our classes—after having learned it ourselves—that it is folly to raise the question, "What would Jesus do?", or to expect to find in the Bible clear-cut and unmistakable answers to modern problems and perplexities the better. It is so easy to say, "We will let the Bible speak for itself. We will not try to prejudice its answers. We will let it answer our questions precisely as it will." And we fail to see that in that attitude we have foredoomed ourselves to failure. Who are we to expect answers to *our* queries from those of a different age and race from ours? Our task is not to propound the questions but to see what questions they were interested in; to listen to their queries as well as to their answers.

Thus, while I heartily agree with Mr. Riddle's insistence upon the value of the "how," I should be inclined to emphasize a bit more than he does, and for a quite different reason, the "what." For example, probably we would all agree that it would be absurd to attempt to use the story of the Wedding Feast at Cana to answer modern questions about the propriety of using alcoholic beverages. Quite aside from the more than dubious historical basis of that particular incident, it is of no particular consequence to us whether Jesus did or did not drink wine. The point of significance for us is that we have to solve our problems ourselves. Not infrequently we discover, to be sure, that modern problems are also ancient ones, and that what was a common-sense answer then may after all be quite appropriate today. It would be folly to refuse light if it be light. But occasionally—I fancy more frequently than we sometimes realize

—our answers will have to be the precise opposite of that made years ago to problems superficially the same as ours by men and women of superlative genius. For example, Jesus apparently rejected divorce for any and all reasons. But that his pronouncement ends the matter, as a large part of Christendom still believes, would appear to me nonsense. I think it extremely likely that the word attributed to John the Baptist about giving away one coat if you have two was actually a word of Jesus or at least faithfully reproduces his view, and I even think I know why he said it. I, however, have not the slightest intention of giving away my other suit. In a word, it appears to me absurd to mouth the phrase, "I believe it because it is in the Bible" or "because Jesus said it;" not infrequently we find that good morals and common sense—and the two are not infrequently synonymous despite our reluctance to believe it—require us to say "no" when Jesus apparently had said "yes."

It is precisely because of this to me indisputable fact that, as I have already said, I should be inclined to emphasize more than does Mr. Riddle the value of knowing the "what." He is right when he says that the place of the Bible in the curricula of theological seminaries, not to mention those of colleges and universities, is increasingly insecure. Personally I think it very unfortunate, but that the responsibility rests squarely on our own shoulders. We have fiddled while Rome burned. Some of us have talked about the cultural values incident in knowing, for example, the story of Samson although we totally disapproved of the antics of Samson; others of us have tried to force the Bible as an infallible handbook of morals and religion, if not of history and science, upon a student world which has rightly been taught by all the other university faculties to be skeptical of everything labelled "infallible." Both approaches savor of shoddy thinking, might even be called nonsense. Is it not about time for us to begin emphasizing to our classes that one of the very real reasons why we should "study the Bible"—to use a phrase which I particularly dislike—is to be able to feel free to reverse, when the situation seems to warrant, its apparent dictates? We should not fool ourselves. There may be a noisy

*(Concluded on page 228)*



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Philosophy and Theology

*A Philosophy of Religion.* By EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1940. xvii + 539 pages. \$3.00 (School); \$4.00 (Trade).

The philosophic problem of religion, according to the author of this volume, is to determine, in the face of the numerous, contradictory religious beliefs and value claims, whether any religious beliefs are true and whether any religious value claims are actually objective. To give an answer to these questions is the task which this volume undertakes. The best possible answer to these questions, the author adds, is the best possible philosophy of religion.

By way of setting before the reader the vast store of religious beliefs and ideals which are to be evaluated, the author makes a rapid survey of the results of scholarship concerning primitive and historic religions, concluding with a summary statement of the *chief religious beliefs* which, when narrowed down to the *central beliefs* that give rise to the problem of philosophy of religion, are three: 1) "That there is an objective source of value expressing itself in the cosmos; 2) That human individuals experience values; and 3) That religious value is experienced as a relation of the human individuals to the Divine" (p. 131).

An analytic investigation of these central beliefs follows, giving the standpoints of the various contemporary schools of thought, but concluding, in each case, with what the author considers "the best possible answer." And the *best possible answer* in each instance is that of Personal Theism.

By way of distinguishing between approaches to an evaluation of these beliefs.

The author calls attention to two radically different ways of constructing a philosophy of religion, designating the one *evolutionary*, which assumes that "truth is more likely to be found by a continual development of the values and beliefs discovered by historical religions than it is by a repudiation of them;" and the other *revolutionary*, which seems to imply "a radical break with the history of religion." It is the former that the author considers the more valid approach. And, as the matter is stated, one could hardly regard any other choice sound. But the matter is not as simple as it is stated. Consistent adherence to the *evolutionary* method tends to turn thought, unavoidably, into a kind of apologetics for what has been held as true or possible; even as the *revolutionary* method tends, unavoidably, to question or to break with the historic path. And when thinking is made to assume this role it becomes defensive rather than exploratory. As one follows the author through devious paths and arguments, coming out at the conclusion of each chapter with a carefully reasoned summary of what the personal theist may believe, he cannot avoid the impression that the author has fallen into that lamentable habit of philosophizing.

One who undertakes to philosophize about religion, must necessarily be concerned about man's value and destiny. But to be concerned about these issues is not identical with proving that what one cherishes is above all else worth cherishing. This is the weakness of philosophies of religion that stake the enterprise of religion upon the survival value of man's hopes and desires. What men have cherished may be the mark of their own impoverishment. It may be the very thing that insulates them from what is most worthy. That is why the ex-

plorative, rather than the defensive procedure seems to me to be more sound in philosophy of religion, even though it may incur undue indifference to the claims of tradition.

As a survey of the issues of philosophy of religion, however, this book has considerable merit. Perhaps no writer in the field is better qualified than Professor Brightman to attempt the particular task which this book undertakes. Possessed of a wide ranging mind that seeks to encompass all the known facts bearing upon his problem, and an inclusive attitude that enters sympathetically into opposing views, he is peculiarly gifted in the art of encyclopedic and interpretative writing. And one can say, too, that his own philosophic position, which could be characterized as a personal idealism, tempered by leanings toward empirical naturalism, enables him to mediate between opposing schools of thought on many issues.

Because of these qualities, Brightman's *A Philosophy of Religion* will find ready use as a text book, especially in college courses in philosophy of religion. Brightman, however, is an ardent prophet of Personal Idealism. And the passion of his own beliefs has crept into this volume so repeatedly, that despite its breadth of interpretation, the book takes on the temper of a catechism for personal theists.

BERNARD EUGENE MELAND

*Pomona College*

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*Science and Wisdom.* By JACQUES MARITAIN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940. 250 pages. \$3.00.

This is another book by the most notable neo-Thomist philosopher of our time. The first half of the book discusses three related subjects: Science and Wisdom, The Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Faith. The rest of the book is given to rather unsystematic discussion of various aspects of Moral Philosophy. The contents

are epistemological in nature. The frame of reference is neo-Scholasticism. The ideas are supplemental to what the author has already said in his previous books, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, *De La Philosophie Chrétienne* and *True Humanism*. The author calls the book a contribution to the philosophy of culture. For non-Catholic readers the terminology and the technicality of many ideas make the book difficult reading. The bookmaking is marred by thirty-two emendations which the reader is asked to make at the start.

Maritain holds that in the ancient world there were three competing wisdoms. The Oriental wisdom (especially that of the Hindus) was one of supreme natural aspiration toward the spiritual and divine; abortive or unfulfilled human effort. The Greek was rational wisdom turned toward created things; a superb this-worldly achievement. The wisdom of Moses and the prophets was one of salvation, freedom, eternal life. "The wisdom of salvation is not achieved by man but given by God . . . essentially supraphilosophical, suprametaphysical, and really divine."

The truly Christian world is one of a hierarchy of wisdoms. Highest of all is infused wisdom or the wisdom of grace. It attains to God in his very deity; is a wisdom of love and union; mystical and sovereign. Second to this is theological wisdom, a wisdom revealed by God to believing souls through reason. And below the theological is metaphysical wisdom which is a rational and natural human wisdom. In a properly ordered life, the three are "concurrent and synergic." Beneath metaphysics and subalternated to it should be a philosophy of nature. And below the philosophy of nature are the several sciences. Each of these forms of knowledge has work and rights of its own, but is also incomplete in itself and is subalternated to those above it. "The philosophy of nature is an indispensable mediator which reconciles the world of the



particular sciences (which is inferior to it) with the world of metaphysical wisdom, which it obeys."

Since the Renaissance the world has gained in many ways, but it has suffered immensely for its failure to realize a truly Christian philosophy, "a philosophy within the faith . . . a philosophy neither enrolled nor attenuated, but free: Philosophy itself situated in the climate of explicit faith and of baptismal grace . . . There is only one wisdom and that is supernatural . . . Theology receives its principles, by way of the faith, from the intuitive science of the souls who see God. Theology is a form of knowledge whose roots are in heaven, and which reaches true conclusions on the mystery at once natural and supernatural of human conduct."

The main purpose and the theme of the book are stated by the author. "A philosophy in faith, and especially the role and importance of moral philosophy subalternated to theology are not today sufficiently recognized . . . My central thesis of the validity and necessity of a moral philosophy worked out within the faith and enlightened by the light of theology." In the light of his presuppositions and purpose, the distinguished author has probably done what he set out to do. But some unconvinced reader may be grateful to him for saying "The unbeliever forgives the believer his faith, the believer forgives the unbeliever his lack of it, and neither is God to judge the other."

HORACE T. HOUF

*Ohio University*

*The Meaning of Happiness.* By ALAN W. WATTS. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1940. xxiv + 219 pages. \$2.50.

Most readers of the *Journal of Bible and Religion* are probably not in the habit of reading books on "Happiness." But anyone who has ever struggled to explain the paradoxes of Zen Buddhism to an under-

graduate or lay audience will be grateful for Mr. Watts' success in finding everyday words with which to interpret the insight he finds behind both Oriental religions and contemporary analytical psychology. He is critical without being technical. He tells modern man how to find "salvation" not through "works" or asceticism, but through a new awareness. It will not be news to students of Christianity that salvation cannot be found by one's own efforts, but it is new to read a book setting forth the psychological truth common to Christian acceptance of the grace of God, Taoist passivity, and Hindu, Zen Buddhist and Jungian "acceptance of the opposites." Like the scriptures and psycho-analytic technique which it illuminates, this book aims primarily to evoke a certain kind of experience. It would lead us back to our own door to find Reality. In the light of this realization we can better understand what the ancient texts are driving at: why, for example, a Zen disciple might answer his Master's examination-question by pointing to an old bucket in the kitchen. . . . These old sages, with Mr. Watts, are showing us that Reality is *here*.

"And if Zen reveals to us the central experience of Oriental religion, no one can say that Asia can offer us only the *via negativa* of denying the world. Eastern philosophy makes an illusion of man and the universe only as a step to making them divine, so that we may see a wonder and a miracle in the drawing of water and the carrying of fuel. For in the doctrine that each creature and thing is a transitory aspect of the eternal Brahman only a benighted mind could read a denial of living forms; yet the intention was to accord them the most tremendous affirmation that man could utter" (p. 173).

The author warns us that Westerners should not imitate the East, but should arrive at the same realization in their own way, through a psychological interpretation of Christianity. Mr. Watts' fresh interpretations of Christian texts in this light may stimulate many laymen to reopen their New

Testaments. Others may feel that this psychological emphasis needs supplementation from the social and historical teachings of the Bible. Like other primarily psychological solutions of human problems, this book is tempted to ignore what men may do *together* to give more meaning to their daily lives. Although Mr. Watts recognizes that "religion as a quest for personal illumination is necessary but selfish" (p. 195), he takes little interest in social aspects of the Hebrew-Christian tradition which might help to correct self-centeredness, and he seems to dismiss rather lightly the struggle for social justice in American Christianity. Our modern search for serenity and harmony with Life is carried on, not, like the Oriental's, against the background of a relatively stable, organic social order, but in a disordered economy which throws millions of men out of work. The resulting frustration demands social and economic as well as psychological changes for its cure. Doubtless the radicals and reformers need more serenity and "acceptance" but the psycho-analysts and Buddhists need more prophetic realization of the causes and consequences of unemployment!

One might question also whether the author is justified in criticizing asceticism at all stages of the spiritual quest. Although the saints of east and west did not, it is true, find salvation until they had given up relying on their own efforts, did they not first give up "worldly" attachments as a preliminary purification of self-will? The Zen disciple, as well as St. Francis and perhaps most of us, must surrender the distractions of pride and sense before he can realize that "love of Life in all its aspects, including suffering and death," which Mr. Watts has so vividly described.

TERESINA ROWELL

Smith College

*The Faith by Which the Church Lives.* By GEORGIA HARKNESS. New York. The Abingdon Press. 1940. 161 pages. \$1.50.

"The purpose of these lectures is to try to state in outline the basic and perennial, and therefore the *living*, convictions of the Christian Church." The author thus sums up the intention of her Mendenhall Lectures of 1940 at DePauw University. The theme of the five lectures for a conference on preaching is that "there is a deep main stream of historic Christianity which flows on in spite of eddies and whirlpools," and the content of them is an effort to re-state for the contemporary situation the essence of this main stream of the Church's living faith.

Dr. Harkness reviews the work of four recent ecumenical councils in which she participated—Oxford, Madras, Amsterdam, and Geneva—to point out that in a strife-ridden and confused world the Church, and only the Church, of all contemporary institutions has shown itself capable of transcending the divisive barriers of race, nation, and culture, to realize in some measure a world community, the bases of which are common acceptance of the mind of Christ as authoritative and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Especially notable is the lecture on democracy and evangelism, wherein she pleads that democracy—whether a shallow democracy which conceives its function in terms of power politics or a high democracy devoted to the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity on purely humanistic and naturalistic grounds—offers little hope in these dark days. For unless such political ideal is criticized and corrected by an awareness of the judgment of God upon all men and systems alike, democracies degenerate—the former so that the state usurps the place of God, and the latter so that liberty becomes



ruthless individualism, equality becomes equalitarianism which loses sight of the individual, and fraternity becomes loyalty to exclusive clique, clan, or nation. But a shallow evangelism of exhibitionism and religious debauchery is no remedy, nor is a high evangelism of personal purity and devotion adequate unless accompanied by social intelligence and acceptance of social obligation which lays stress upon participation in political action as a Christian vocation. The particularization of this political role of the Church is as clear and cogent a statement of the matter as this reviewer can recall.

One could point to a number of flaws in this little book, such as the obscurantism of the statement that "every science gives evidence which, when spiritually interpreted, accords with theistic faith." Or the too idealized and romantic account of the historic role of organized Christianity. Or the slight recognition of biblical criticism at times in the effort to restate orthodox Christian faith in terms of a liberal theology. But all such criticisms are disarmed by the author's introductory remark that her statement of the faith of the Church will be a statement of her own faith. And such it is—unambiguous, vital with conviction, and vibrant with hope.

WALTER W. SIKES

*Berea College*

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*Forgiveness.* By PAUL LEHMANN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940. xv + 234 pages. \$2.00.

This book by Professor Lehmann of Eden Theological Seminary has several unusual qualities. First, it is a genuinely theological book. It consists first and foremost of sustained reflection on the historic Christian idea of forgiveness, rather than of an attempt to formulate a reasonable substitute for it. It is a discourse on Christian doctrine which any legitimate theology

ought to be, rather than a psychological treatise on the experience of forgiveness in general. "Forgiveness and guilt, imputation and faith, these are the principal constituents which, despite the variety of interpretations, have persisted as the heart of the good news of Jesus Christ (p. 6)." The Gospel with such constituents is an "unheard of miracle," a good news from God, His answer to the need of man for forgiveness. Hence forgiveness has a strictly theological meaning, derived from the work of Jesus Christ. Dr. Lehmann may well be one of those few theologians who will teach us to Christianize reason and conscience rather than to rationalize and moralize our Christianity away.

Secondly, Dr. Lehmann's point of view makes his book unusually objective and rigorous. It is truly a relief to read a book which does not confuse theological thinking with idealization of human experience. An essay on forgiveness is a dangerous thing to write about. Most discussions of the subject are marred by rhetorical eulogies of forgiveness, as inspired by experience and embellished by lively imagination. They confuse the ideal and the real, the true and the false, the human and the divine. They often cause vague and momentary elation, but they seldom enlighten or edify. Dr. Lehmann pays Christian theology the uncommon compliment of thinking about it. The Christian idea of forgiveness implies that men are sinners, that *God* forgives our sins, that God *forgives* our sins. It raises the problems of Divine justice, the incarnation and the atonement, election and imputation, the Christian life, etc., which call for religious thought as well as pious discourse. It confronts with the issues raised by the supralapsarians and the Arminians, the Barthians and the humanistic Ritchlians, yea Catholicism and Protestantism. It takes good thinking as well as good intentions to escape the errors and follies to which the Christian's life is exposed every day. We are grateful

Dr. Lehmann for reminding us that good Christian thinking is not only possible but also very profitable.

Thirdly and consequently, Dr. Lehmann's book displays a degree of fairmindedness in theology which is also unusual in our day. He recognizes that the human-and-the-divine theology of Deism, culminating in the work of Albrecht Ritschl, led as a matter of fact to the implicit and explicit humanisms of our time. It was the great merit of Karl Barth that he checked this downhill movement of theology by repudiating "polarity," and insisting that forgiveness is an "unheard-of miracle." But Barth failed to do justice to the Christian conviction that "the revelation of God in Christ supplies the law of the co-existence of spirit and nature in the world" (p. 171). He failed to preserve the tension between creation and redemption which is necessary to any genuinely dialectical Christian theology. Dr. Lehmann sees the element of natural theology in Emil Brunner's thought as an attempt to establish "the reality of the human situation before the divine act," which is jeopardized by Barth's failure to take seriously the implications of the doctrine of creation. However, Brunner's theology does not escape "polarity" altogether, and cannot be taken as the solution of our problem. Thus, Protestant theology remains confronted with the task of perpetuating the doctrine of forgiveness in terms that are adequately *dialectical*" (p. 195).

The issue raised by Dr. Lehmann is certainly a matter of life and death for Christianity. It amounts to nothing less than the problem of faith in God. In this day of our great need, it is doubly necessary for us to know in whom it is that we believe and to whom we may pray for the forgiveness of our sins. I believe the reader will find his book both timely and very helpful.

JOSEPH HAROUTUNIAN

Presbyterian Theological Seminary,  
Chicago, Illinois

## Religion in Literature

*The Spiritual Aspects of the New Poetry.*

By Amos N. Wilder. New York:  
Harper & Brothers, 1940. \$2.50.

Most surveys of contemporary poetry attempt to analyze either its confusion or its protest: confusion in form and content, written by poets whose negations and experiments have pleased themselves and a few other eccentrics; protest by earnest radicals against social injustice, war, tradition, and complacency. It is not often that a liberal Protestant scholar has sought to find among modernist poets since Noyes and Masefield, Robinson and Frost, any "spiritual aspects" of interest to believers in personal religion. Professor Amos N. Wilder has performed this unusual task with skill and insight. He recognizes both the confusion and the protest, but looks for something more.

Although he finds that little religious poetry of merit has been written in this generation, and although most recent mystical verse is either pantheistic or Anglo-Catholic, yet it seems to him that wherever in recent literature we hear echoes of Dante or the Bhagavad Gita, wherever we hear voices calling in darkness for a way back to light, we are near the eternal way. Seekers and finders are brothers. Gropers would follow if they could see.

The most penetrating and original part of this book is the searching examination of poets of despair like Robinson Jeffers and Hart Crane, whose reduction of human life to elemental ruins bears witness to a new paganism more terrible than that of the superficial crowd. Superhuman becomes subhuman. Man against the sky becomes man beneath the sea. To defy or to submerge are soon the same. Jeffers' stone tower beside the Pacific and Crane's suicide in the Caribbean both equal not infinity but zero. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. Professor Wilder is not satisfied to call such poets "morbid."



He would understand them, and does not shrink from examining "the cult of the irrational," the worship of sensation, the naturalism of our age.

These are not "spiritual aspects"—rather anti-spiritual—except as they reveal man's search for other guides than reason in his tragic attempts without God to understand and defy his fate. But readers of modernist poetry who have given up trying to interpret its cryptic speech, to put up with its incoherence and excuse its deliberate dissonance, will find much aid in this unusual book. Because the author is concerned primarily with substance rather than form, he is not enough irritated by obscurity to blame it, nor enough intrigued by novelty to praise it. He accepts, and passes on—as one must do with all highly individual poets from Donne to his modern parallels.

For most readers, however, these modernist poets are less interesting in their solitary dilemmas than in their social protests. As between society and dissociation, when considered as subjects for literature, it is more cheerful and more useful to think of the struggling many rather than of the disintegrating self. "No more of that; that way madness lies." The large space which Dr. Wilder gives to Auden, Spender, Lewis, Patchen, and other "proletarian poets" of England and America shows that he regards any sort of indignation against injustice as having a "spiritual aspect." He does not raise the question whether poetry is as effective a form for agitation against evil as the novel or the drama, for an artist must work in the form best adapted to his skill. Any form serves for propaganda if it arouses attention.

But it is doubtful whether any of the poets considered in this part of the book are widely read either by the laboring people whose cause they champion or the "bourgeoisie" whose complacency they challenge. Whitman did not reach them in his day; why should his weaker disciples hope to

make them listen? Nearly all modernist poets have about as limited an audience as modernist composers or painters—a small but noisy group of contentious critics, and small, inarticulate group of amateurs who wonder what it is all about. They do not matter much in the great whirling complex called America, though they like to think they do.

Religious leaders will find stimulus and guidance in these scholarly interpretations of irreligious literature, especially in the "Orientation and Reading Guide" in the appendix. It is always desirable for defenders to read authors whom they attack; they cannot change their emotions, but they may change their minds.

Few will agree with the author that a revival of the "essentially Puritan and Christian discovery of autonomous and responsible personality" offers "the most potent and promising resources for art and literature" (p. 231). He admits that Protestantism cannot expect another Milton, but hopes that in its emancipated and enlightened form it may yet find artistic expression worthy of its ethical vigor and social ardor. There is little evidence to support such a wish.

Protestant liberalism has strong attractions for moderns too honest for medievalism and too independent for authority. But it has two serious defects for which no remedy has been found. It cannot win the multitude because it appeals to intelligence rather than emotion; and it cannot find adequate utterance in the arts of poetry, fiction, drama, architecture, and music, because these to-day at their most vital points are arts of revolution.

Liberalism aristocratically abhors extremes. It distrusts the passing fads of abnormal psychology, the Marxian dialectic, the dramatizing of mental dissociation, the sentimentalizing of crime, the palliation of license by naming it freedom and of obscenity by calling it candor. It distrusts all these not because it is Victorian but because it

holds that man can be victorious. One does not need to call himself a humanist in order to exalt the life of the spirit rather than to dwell on the decay of the body, of a moral code, or of a dying political order. But to sound this note is unpopular to-day. Yet if a modern Christian must be less of a man than could early Platonists and Stoics, let him blame himself, not his environment, for the easy descent to Avernus.

If one can judge from current magazines, to write acceptable poetry to-day one must be maladjusted, rebellious, and fond of cross-word puzzles. One doubts if return to the underlying principles of the Reformation will lead a return to Parnassus. That mountain is far from Sinai and Calvary, far also from Morningside Heights and Capitol Hill. Art is an expression, not a campaign. The future of poetry lies not with conflict but with beauty.

JOHN ROTHWELL SLATER

*The University of Rochester*

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*Strangers and Pilgrims.* By WILLARD L. SPERRY. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1939. 165 pages. \$2.50.

*The Pilgrim's Progress.* Arranged for the Modern Reader by E. W. WALTERS. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1939. 326 pages. \$2.00.

It is always fascinating to watch a man of urbane sophistication who is very much at home in this world when he sets out to have adventures with those to whom this world was a region of shadows compared to the reality of the eternal world. Dean Sperry's book *Strangers and Pilgrims* represents such an experience. It is a very sincere man of the world, however, who sets out on the adventure with an outreach for the vitalities of spiritual religion. He carries us over more to writings of Saint Augustine, Saint Francis, Brother Lawrence, John Woolman, and looks in upon the *Imi-*

*tation of Christ* and the *Theologica Germanica*. Of course Dean Sperry's book is written with admirable precision and the restraint which makes a phrase effective. Sometimes it is amazingly effective. Nothing better has been said of Saint Augustine than this: "His genuine intellectual perplexity must have been given personal poignancy by an uneasy conscience at his own want of self-mastery. The cosmic question came home to him as a private humiliation." At times there are theological flashes of superb quality. "Since schismatics are wont to rest their care upon neglected truths, they too often condemn themselves to live permanently upon half-truths." Sometimes there is a sentence of keen philosophical understanding — "mysticism habitually living in dubious borderlands where theism may easily pass over into pantheism, or moral liberty lapse into license." Dean Sperry lets his pilgrims speak for themselves, and brings much keen sympathy to their interpretation. Perhaps inevitably he is a little superior, and perhaps also inevitably he does not quite write from within the tradition which he sets about to interpret.

The new edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* allows one of the great persons of the tradition of Pilgrims and Strangers to speak. And Bunyan is not one of the beads of Dean Sperry's lovely rosary. There are words of introduction by Dean Matthews, who has succeeded Dr. Inge at Saint Paul's, and by Dr. Eric Waterhouse. But it is the book itself, relieved of features which make it difficult reading for the contemporary, to which we turn. Here once more we follow Christian on his tragic and glorious journey. Here once more we travel with his wife and children as they follow on. The sturdy, pithy seventeenth century English still holds our attention in its grasp. The moral and spiritual insights once more turn into vivid pictures. Abstractions become human and virtues and vices look out of human eyes. Once



and again the covering of convention is torn away and we starkly face ourselves and as clearly face the truth at the heart of things. At the end we feel that Bunyan, to use his own amazing phrase, can indeed "tumble the hills about with words." When men cease to find matters of desperate significance and of lovely promise in *Pilgrim's Progress*, it will be the men of blind hearts whom we must subject to criticism and not the seer who saw the universe from Bedford jail.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

Drew University

### The American Mind

*The Course of American Democratic Thought. An Intellectual History since 1815.* By RALPH HENRY GABRIEL. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1940. 452 pages. \$4.00.

Mr. Gabriel's book is seminal and thought-provoking. It ought to be read by every American citizen, for it attempts to ascertain what are the basic doctrines of the democratic faith. According to the author, these are (1) a reverence for "fundamental law" overarching all human concerns; (2) nationalism, or the belief that the United States has a "mission" to perform for the world at large; (3) the ideal of the free individual; and (4) the faith in progress. These four doctrines are emphasized throughout the six "parts" of the book, of which the most original are the third, stressing the effects of "the new naturalism of Darwinian evolution;" the fourth, on the scholarship of W. G. Sumner, F. J. Turner, Henry Adams, Josiah Royce, and William James as it bore on democracy; and the fifth, on "the philosophy of progress." If the work as a whole falls short of Parrington's clean-cut quality and his dramatic antitheses of ideas, it is much richer and many-sided because, eschewing Parrington's narrow economic determinism,

Professor Gabriel has a much more open and flexible mind and is willing to follow the complex interweavings of all sorts of influences, giving us a nice balance between purely "intellectual history" and social history. Indeed, perhaps the chief general weakness of the work is that, in drawing on such a wide variety of evidence in so many different fields, Mr. Gabriel has difficulty in establishing convincing causal relationships. One occasionally has the impression that the choice of evidence is somewhat arbitrary. The long essay on Melville for which Mr. Gabriel expresses his indebtedness to Norman Pearson, is marvelously rich in insight and style and focused structure. But since Melville was not much read in his own day and was not at all representative, why should a social historian interested in the mass-mind, single him out for special emphasis in connection with democracy, when broadly representative and vastly popular spokesmen of democracy such as Whittier, Lowell, Mark Twain and Howells are practically ignored? One feels that a different choice of literary figures might well have led to different conclusions. But it is enlightening to have so many neat expositions of the thought of hundreds of little-known pamphleteers, scientists, and sociologists, and nowhere else will one find so much evidence concerning the very important history of the idea of progress in this country. Mr. Gabriel shows a fine imaginative touch in dealing with the symbols by which the masses objectify their ideals. Among these symbols, Washington, the Declaration of Independence, the law courts and churches as well as Lincoln, the Constitution, and the Supreme Court are brilliantly treated as they affected the emotions of the masses. The book is full of keen intuitions, suggestive generalization, and original demonstrations of the cross-fertilization of ideas in widely diverse fields. Possibly the question of the four basic doctrines of democ-

racy would have been placed in a more convincing position if Mr. Gabriel had taken time to show that these doctrines are denied in monarchical or fascist countries, and if he had compared and contrasted democracy with other ideologies. Some of the fuzziness of his discussion of "fundamental law" might have been eliminated if he had made use of C. F. Mullett's able book on the subject, although that deals especially with the Revolutionary period.

Mr. Gabriel concludes that today one of democracy's doctrines, "nationalism, is magnified almost beyond recognition. All of the others, those of the fundamental law, of the free individual, and the philosophy of progress, are challenged. It may be that they are on the way out." But he seems to have faith in democracy as essentially "a philosophy of the mean" and he follows Melville in asserting that the human spirit is unconquerable and that men will refuse to be dragged down to animalism.

*The New England Mind. The Seventeenth Century.* By PERRY MILLER. New York: The Macmillian Company, 1939. 528 pages. \$3.75.

Professor Miller's book has been widely acclaimed, and deservedly, as a monumental and definitive treatment of its very important subject. Although it is exceedingly difficult reading, partly because of its fidelity to the somewhat strange terminology of the period, it will repay the closest study. The work consists of four "books" on "religion and learning," "cosmology," "anthropology" (including penetrating chapters on rhetoric and the plain style), and "sociology," followed by appendices on "The Literature of Ramus' Logic in Europe" (unique emphasis is placed on the influence of Ramus as opposed to Aristotle) and on "The Federal School of Theology." The first part of the work emphasizes, possibly a bit too much, the influence of

Augustinian and Platonic thought, and the latter part brings Puritan thought to bear on local New England political questions. The structure is determined not so much by chronology or authors as individuals as by the logical articulation of ideas placed in distinct pigeon-holes. Indeed some students of the complexities of Puritan thought, and of controversies between individuals such as conservative John Cotton and Roger Williams (the first "Rhode Island Red"), may question Mr. Miller's claim that one can treat "the whole literature as though it were the product of a single intelligence" devoted to an "almost unbroken allegiance to a unified body of thought." And although Mr. Miller (in collaboration with Mr. T. H. Johnson) has already given us a magnificent annotated bibliography of all phases of Puritan thought and life in the elaborate anthology entitled *The Puritans* (N. Y., 1938, pp. 785-834), scholars will deplore the fact that they will have to journey to Cambridge if they would ascertain "the provenience of each quotation" for that is given only in one "annotated copy of this volume (which) has been filed in the Harvard College Library."

These, however, are the merest trifles compared to the impressive values of this work. Following Mr. Samuel Morison's extensive studies in Puritan education, Mr. Miller emphasizes the great extent to which the Puritans drew on the humanistic culture of pre-Puritan Europe; never before have the logical roots of Puritanism in the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Humanism, and Anglicanism been so fully and precisely demonstrated. One is amazed at the vast number of very rare pamphlets, sermons, etc., on which Mr. Miller draws. While possibly somewhat more attention might have been devoted to humanizing the subject and to social, political, and economic influences, as well as to colorful personalities, it is refreshing in this era of cynical "economic determinism" to find someone who



respects ideas as having a power of their own and who devotes himself to the inner logic of this great movement. The tone of the book is one of dignity, sympathy, and strict objectivity. Mr. Miller's argument is far too complex for any brief summary. Broadly speaking, however, he is concerned with showing the way in which the Puritans were eventually led to turn election into a church covenant according to which an opportunity was given for each sinner to make a private contract with God, thus tempering predestination with some degree of hopeful assurance of salvation. The sections on the manner in which the theory of the covenant between man and God was extended to embrace the theory that the state government also is based upon a covenant or agreement are especially incisive and illuminating, furnishing a background for Alice Baldwin's study of *The New England Pulpit and the Revolution*. And although somewhat disproportionate emphasis may be given to the subject, Mr. Miller succeeds in showing that the Puritans had a great deal more interest in science and nature than has generally been recognized. He admits, however, that they recognized "the insufficiency of natural knowledge for salvation" (p. 210); as John Cotton said, "we shall not heal the crooked perversity of our natures by learning about the creation."

HARRY HAYDEN CLARK

University of Wisconsin

### Judaism

*Philo and the Oral Law*. By SAMUEL BELKIN. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940. 292 pages. \$3.50.

Professor Belkin has made in this book a detailed analysis of the contents of Philo's *De specialibus legibus* to discover how far its legal prescriptions are in agreement with the Tannaitic Halakah. The opinions of scholars have long been divided on the sources of Philo's social ethics and the ques-

tion is still mooted as to whether Philo was primarily a philosopher influenced largely by the cosmopolitan Greek thought of his time or whether he was fundamentally a Jew with a mind not only steeped in the Torah but also moulded by rabbinic tradition. The crux of this problem is the interpretation of the *De specialibus legibus* for in this treatise Philo's broader philosophical interests are consistently subordinated to his concern with specific points of law and traditional observance. A right judgment on the sources of this material carries with it large implications for Philo's mentality as well as his position in Hellenistic Judaism.

Belkin's view is that Philo's legal opinions are based for the most part on the decisions of local Jewish courts in Egypt which in turn were formed on principles substantially identical with those operative in Palestine. The status of these courts is open to question but Belkin believes that they had at least the binding consent of the Jewish community behind them and "power to inflict minor penalties on the members of their communities." This uncertainty is of less importance than at first might appear since much of the legal discussion is casuistic rather than practical, but here too Belkin argues for a predominately Palestinian influence of a mixed type, partly Pharisaic partly Sadducean. He denies any part to the followers of the Temple of Onias and explains the occasional deviations in Philo from what we know of rabbinic law either as reflections of genuine but otherwise unattested Jewish views or as concessions to current Greek and Roman jurisprudence in Egypt.

The great value of this book lies in the thoroughness with which the comparison of Philo's traditions with the Talmud and other Hebrew sources has been carried out. Belkin is an exceptionally well-trained Talmudist and has a natural sympathy with the legal aspects of his subject. His conviction, however, that Philo was a trained lawyer, familiar with Palestinian precedent

and tradition, occasionally induces him to read meanings into rather than out of Philo's text and this tendency is unfortunately strengthened by a notable uncertainty about the meaning of Greek.

A few examples will suffice to show this:  
(a) Doubtless Philo sometimes uses *nomos* in the sense of Torah (Belkin 36) as do Josephus and the New Testament, but when in *Praem*, 3, 150 he is discussing the king in his capacity as lawgiver and says that a king has both to prescribe and to prohibit and that law (*nomos*), is nothing but *logos prostattōn ha chrē kai apagoreuōn ha mē chrē* it is quite wrong to say, "He says that law is nothing else but the *logos* prescribing what one should and should not do . . . Here Philo uses the term *logos* in the sense sometimes found in the LXX, namely a commandment (*mizwah*), and Philo's definition of it is the same as the Tannaitic division of biblical law, into positive and negative commandments." All Philo says is that law in general has a rational basis and expresses in its commands and prohibitions the promptings and checks of reason.

(b) I cannot see that Philo's paraphrase of Num. 35.31-2 (*Spec. Leg.* 3.150) violates the meaning of the LXX and Belkin (37) is apparently under the impression that *tou pheugein* is a participial construction.

(c) It is hardly surprising that Philo's text of Dt. 14.4-7 should agree with that of the Codex Alexandrinus.

(d) It is not true that *grammata stikta*, a phrase which Philo uses to describe the forbidden idolatrous practice (Lev. 19.28) of branding the body, means a "written mark" and cannot refer to indelible imprints (Belkin 39), as a glance at Liddell and Scott shows.

(e) It is equally erroneous to state (Belkin 40) that *paideuō* in LXX Hos. 7.12 would not have suggested to Philo the idea of physical chastisement, cf. Lk. 23.16.

(f) Whatever the form of the inscription

on the High Priest's head dress, *hagiousa kuriou* (LXX. Ex. 28.36), does not mean "Holy to the Lord." Quite apart from the Bible, Philo must have known that the Tetragrammaton was inscribed on the mitre and that a reverent reserve obtained in the use of the sacred name. If, as Belkin quotes from Sot. 7,6, a substitute for the divine name was regularly employed in the provinces, the fact of the substitution must have been common knowledge.

(g) Philo's statement that a man who has not tied up a wild bull is responsible for the damage it does, may reflect Palestinian Halakah but hardly goes beyond the plain meaning of Exod. 21.29. The rendering of the Hebrew "kept in" by *aphanisēi* in LXX is unimportant but *katakleisas phulattēi* means "keeps enclosed" and does not necessarily imply entrusting the animal to another's charge; the Halakah can be read into but not out of the passage.

Apart from questions of detail Belkin's book must be recognized as a notable contribution to Philonic study. He has proved conclusively, though not at all points he imagined, Philo's acquaintance with Palestinian legal tradition and his loyalty to it. In spite of theological differences between moderate literalists and the conservative party at Alexandria, there is every reason to believe that in legal as well as ethnic and social practice the Jewish community there was a homogeneous group closely attached to their Palestinian brethren. The distinction between Philo the Jew and Philo the philosopher is not new but Belkin has given it fresh force and significance. Apparently Philo and his friends formed not a group of latitudinarians in thought and practice but, like his Christian follower and admirer Clement and his pupils, a school of advanced thought within the structure of a closely knit community united by the bonds of a common heritage, a common faith and a common life.

ROBERT P. CASEY

Brown University



## The Bible

### *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.*

By JAMES MOFFATT. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1938. xxxii + 286 pages. \$3.50.

It will not be easy to evaluate this commentary without the use of superlatives which ordinarily should be avoided. Its excellency is partly due to the series to which it belongs, being the fourteenth volume of The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, with but three more volumes to appear, being based on Moffatt's translation and under his editorship. The primary aim of the series is to bring out the religious meaning and message of the New Testament writings and what they originally meant for the communities to which they were addressed in the first century. But while this involves literary and historical criticism, it is employed in this series not for its own sake but as a means to the end, that being faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, which is the real object of the New Testament, that Christians might believe it better, in the light of contemporary life with its intellectual and moral problems.

But in the commentary before us all this is enhanced by the fact that it is Dr. Moffatt himself, the editor of the series, who contributes the volume. This assures us of its excellency. Dr. Moffatt, it is safe to say, has no superior in biblical scholarship. He has brought to bear all the wealth of his biblical scholarship on the elucidation of this Epistle; and if simplicity is the perfection of art, we have in our hands a masterpiece of the first rank. It offers no startling novelties in introduction or exposition. As is now generally held, Paul's First and Second Corinthians contain really four epistles; each of them originated in specific problems within the Corinthian church.

The exposition is not stereotyped, but fresh and illuminated from the classical and archaeological material supplied by discoveries and recent studies. It marks progress in

clearer exegesis and a better understanding of obscure passages. One instance which illustrates this must suffice: 10:18, "Behold Israel after the flesh," translated, "Look at the rites of Israel," explained in newer fashion as referring to "the paschal celebrations which characterized Israel's tie to their God, when a covenant sacrifice was followed by a covenant meal." Those who are familiar with recent discussions on the meaning of Old Testament sacrifices, led by W. Robertson Smith, will recognize the leaning toward the newer conception of sacrifice as possessing communal significance.

It was hardly expected that the time would come when a commentary would be read with ease in continuous cursory manner like any other book. But this can be done with Moffatt's First Corinthians. Instead of dealing with the text piecemeal, chief attention is given to the general content. The effect of this procedure is to give the book the character of an essay. The literary style is lucid and free from technicalities, although based on first hand Greek study. Its value for curricular Bible study by students and laymen as well as ministers cannot be overstated. It should stimulate the perusal in few sittings and furnish the pleasurable occasion to take in as a whole the meaning and message of one of Paul's great epistles.

ISMAR J. PERITZ

## Archaeology

*The Megiddo Ivories.* By GORDON LOUD. (The University of Chicago, Oriental Institute Publications, Vol. LII). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939. xi + 25 pages, 63 Plates. \$15.00.

"Phoenician" ivories have been found in many excavations in the Near East, in widely separated sites. The most important collections have been discovered at Nimrud and Khorsabad in the territory of ancient

ssyria; at Arslan Tash and a site whose identity is not now known in northern Syria (the collection from the latter is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York); at Enkomi in Cyprus; and at Samaria and Megiddo in Palestine. They have also been found in southern Spain, near Carmona. Some of these are from as early as the fourteenth or thirteenth century B. C., and some from as late as the eighth century. One piece from Arslan Tash is inscribed with the name "Hazael," the king of Damascus in the ninth century, mentioned in the Bible.

The word "Phoenician" is placed in quotation marks advisedly, and the use of the term is open to misunderstanding. It should not be assumed that all of these ivories which are classified together are necessarily of Phoenician craftsmanship nor of specifically Phoenician style. Rather, it seems that the technique probably originated in Phoenicia and was scattered over a wide area by Phoenician merchants and artisans. The style is eclectic, combining artistic motives from many cultures—Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Hittite, and Aegean. There is evidence that some of the pieces were produced by local craftsmen. Nor is it to be thought that these ivories are distinguished *objets d'art*. They are to be considered rather as pieces which were produced in quantity and in standardized patterns for a large market in furniture inlays and insets, cosmetic boxes, combs, game boards, and similar luxury items. The craftsmen who produced them have their successors in the bazaars of Cairo and Damascus today. Nevertheless, many of the ivories exhibit a certain delicacy and charm that show real artistry. Mr. Loud has suggested that ivory-collecting was a hobby among the ancients. This does not seem plausible if comparison is made with stamp-collecting as a hobby; but it is doubtless true that many a householder of means gradually accumulated a "collection" of ivories, for both utilitarian and decorative purposes, over a period of time, and

that his own tastes determined the general nature of the collection.

The Megiddo ivories were found in 1937. They come from Stratum VIIA, and were dug out of a semi-subterranean treasury of the palace of the local governor of the early twelfth century. They were found in great confusion, apparently having been thrown aside, as having little monetary value, when robbers looted the palace. One object, a model pen case, was inscribed with the cartouche of Rameses III (1195-1164). The ivories are thus to be dated generally to the period from c. 1350 to c. 1150.

The ivories of Megiddo are distinguished by their quantity and the variety of subjects and styles; also, they are older than most of the other collections. Nearly four hundred pieces were discovered, and they include such varied objects as a small box, plaques which were probably used as insets in furniture, jar lids, combs, shallow bowls, spoons with figurine handles, game boards and playing pieces, small model heads of human beings and animals, rings, and similar objects, some of which cannot be specifically identified as to use.

The student of the Bible may consider these objects as admirable examples of Canaanite art (with the qualifications suggested above) of about the time of the Hebrew exodus and the early part of the Judges period, since Stratum VII of Megiddo or (more probably) Stratum VI, which came to an end a little after 1100 B. C., was the last Canaanite stratum before the first of the Israelites. One may see that this art had much in common with that of Syria and find justification for the usual theory that Syria and Palestine formed at this time a more or less homogeneous cultural unit.

Of special interest to the reader of the Bible should be the ivories which are incised with scenes, notably those illustrated on Plates 4, 32, and 33. Plate 4 is the most interesting of all: a Canaanite prince is seated on a throne, which is supported by winged sphinxes (such as the cherubim of



the Bible must have been), drinking out of a large bowl; standing near him are his princess and a minstrel who is playing a harp (a Canaanite "David"); and two naked, circumcised (Israelite?) captives are being brought before him, tied to a chariot. It is very interesting to read the Song of Deborah in Judges 5 and then turn to this scene and those depicted on the ivories of Plates 32 and 33. One will see a Canaanite soldier with shield and spear, such as the Israelites were denied (v. 8); chariots and horses such as the Canaanites, including Sisera, must have used in fighting against Barak and his men; examples of the kind of "lordly bowl" in which Jael gave Sisera sour milk before murdering him (v. 25); and illustrations of the embroidered garments which Sisera's mother expected him to bring home as spoil (v. 30).

These ivories have been published with the promptness, accuracy, and completeness characteristic of the Oriental Institute. Of many of the ivories we are given not only photographs, but also line drawings and conjectural restorations. The latter should make the volume especially welcome to those who are often discouraged by the fragmentary nature of many objects found by archaeologists. The book is an excellent publication of a very significant archaeological discovery.

*The Other Side of the Jordan.* By NELSON GLUECK. xviii + 208 pages. New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1940. \$2.50.

Professor Nelson Glueck accomplished a great amount of very important archaeological work during the period, only recently ended, that he was Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. During most of this time Palestine was torn by civil disturbances which prevented the usual amount of excavation there. Professor Glueck turned this disadvantage into a gain for science by concentrating his atten-

tion upon Transjordan, a region that is less civilized but more peaceful than Palestine proper (a sad commentary upon our "civilization"! ). Even under normal conditions archaeological work in most of Transjordan is arduous, owing to the extremes of weather, the sparseness of settlement, the great distances and other obstacles, but Glueck has shown himself to be possessed of unusual energy and resourcefulness. The present volume is an expansion of lectures which he delivered in America from October to December, 1939. It gives in very readable and readily accessible form a summary of his archaeological activities, which are presented elsewhere in more detailed and scientific manner.

Glueck's work has been concerned with four main purposes: (1) Archaeological survey of Transjordan to determine the occupational history and boundaries of the ancient kingdoms in this territory. This survey has been carried out in part by airplane. It is almost complete, except for a portion in northern Gilead. In general, the Other Side of the Jordan was occupied in the period from c. 2300 B. C. to c. 1900 B. C., after which there was a gap in settled occupation (although naturally there must have been tent-dwelling nomads here) until the beginning of the thirteenth century. Again, the country was settled and saw a flourishing civilization until the end of the sixth century, after which there was another lacuna until the third century. These results have important bearing upon several Biblical problems,—for example, the date of Abraham, which must have been before c. 1900, and the date of the Hebrew entrances into Transjordan, not earlier than c. 1300. (2) Survey of the Wadi Arabah, which extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqabah, for the evidences of copper and iron mining. It is certain now that this great valley was rich in mineral resources which were exploited in ancient times, especially in the reign of Solomon. (3) Excavation of Tell Kheleifeh, the ancient Ezion-

ber. Here four successive towns were uncovered, the earliest of which was built by Solomon. Glueck's excavations have made this site popularly, and not too inaccurately, known as the "Pittsburgh of Palestine." (4) Excavation of Nabatean temples at Khirbet Tannur. This excavation brought to light several sculptures of Nabatean deities. In fact, the results of this excavation, and of many discoveries in other parts of Transjordan, show that "the Nabateans were one of the most gifted peoples known in history" (p. 160)."

It is readily apparent that Glueck's discoveries have yielded a vast amount of information concerning the history of Transjordan, especially its economic history. This region was capable of supporting a comparatively large population, based upon an agricultural economy, when its inhabitants were sufficiently skillful and energetic to make the most of the potential water supply. The factors causing the gaps in occupation are not all known, but the author discounts the possibility that great fluctuation in rainfall was the primary factor. Transjordan had valuable mineral deposits and was on important trade routes. Its economic orientation generally, however, was toward Syria and Arabia rather than Palestine. The other Side of the Jordan has suffered in the light of history because of the superior importance, for religious reasons, of its neighbor on this side of the Jordan.

Every teacher will find much in this book that is of both direct and indirect value for his understanding of the Bible. It is well written and profusely illustrated. This volume is one of the most important books written in recent years with the purpose of presenting to the general public the results of significant archaeological discoveries.

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## Missions

*The Gospel in the World.* By GODFREY E. PHILLIPS. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1940. 252 pages. \$2.00.

The author, once a missionary in India, is professor of Missions in Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, England. This volume grew out of a need felt by him for a suitable text book on the principles and practice of missions. For the range of topics considered in its sixteen chapters as well as for its forceful treatment, the volume may be heartily commended, not only to those preparing for service abroad, but also to ministers and to missionaries of experience.

The present trend toward seeking a deeper theological justification for the continuing missionary enterprise finds expression in five chapters. After a brief summary of the universalism of the Old Testament, the various ways in which the critical studies of the New Testament have altered the basis of missions are considered. While recognizing that there are varieties of legitimate motives for missions, the author finds fundamental and indispensable the classical Pauline motive. A distinction is made between general and special revelation and the author's position is differentiated from that of Barth, *Re-Thinking Missions*, and J. U. Farquhar's *Crown of Hinduism*. Evangelism, distinguished both from propaganda and from proselytising, is the proclamation of the objective facts which constitute special revelation.

Five chapters deal with the impact of Christianity on animists, Hindus, Buddhists, the worshippers of images, etc. The effort in each chapter is to show that the Christian history of God coming to earth in Jesus Christ is the precise answer to the needs which the various religious systems have tried to meet.

The last five chapters are more practical in content dealing with the place of the church, the changing relation of the mis-



sionary to the church, the naturalizing of Christianity, missions and governments, and various types of work for social welfare. This book is not so profound as Dr. H. Kraemer's *Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, but many will welcome it for its lucid treatment of vital subjects. The practical sections reveal the background of an experienced missionary; and the strong integration of Christian missions with Christian theology is a needed correction to an over emphasis on the humanitarian aspects of the church's work abroad.

D. J. FLEMING

*Union Theological Seminary*

## Teaching Religion

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the students think or experience them, and to base our philosophizing on those main problems. In order to ascertain these live-spots in religion for the young people, we asked them at the very beginning of each semester to hand in unsigned lists of the problems they would really like to have discussed or questions for which they would like some answer. These questions we grouped around more than a dozen topics under which they naturally came, and those topics indicated the sections of philosophy of religion which would be most alive to the group. In twelve semesters there were over 500 questions turned in by the 180 students who chose to hand them in.<sup>1</sup>

The course was then arranged topically so that all the main problems would receive some introductory but systematic consideration. At the end of the course, the students' lists of questions are brought into class, and those questions which still seem not to have been touched upon are given some direct discussion.

In recent years we have used our own book, *What Religion Is and Does*, which grew out of this course. We require study

of assigned chapters in the book, and devote the class periods to discussing aspects suggested by the reading or to the answering of questions raised by the students. Outside reading is encouraged and numerous references are provided, although the time allotted the course does not permit much outside work to be required.

## Discussion

(Continued from page 211)

group of exhibitionists which finds exquisite pleasure in ridiculing the Bible and its heroes. I am distinctly of the opinion, however, that they constitute a very small and self-conscious minority. The Bible will in all likelihood remain on the pulpits in most churches during our lifetime, despite the Cassandra-like croaking of certain sociologists and religious educationists, and will continue to have a very appreciable influence if against their conscious wills, upon thousands who never darken a church door. Is it not our task to aid people to love it instead of to ignore it or fear it? Jesus is said to have remarked, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; therefore man is lord even of the sabbath." I think it high time for us to apply that altogether admirable principle in the direction of the Bible: "The Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible; therefore man is lord even of the Bible." To free ourselves from absurd notions as to what the Bible is not and should not be is one of the first steps toward allowing it to shine forth in its beauty and power, revealing what is and can be. And to achieve this a knowledge of both the "what" and the "how" appears to me indispensable.

MORTON S. ENSLIN

*Crozer Theological Seminary*

## THE ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-first annual meeting of the National Association of Biblical Instructors will be held at Union Theological Seminary, Friday and Saturday, December 27 and 28. As part of the program there will be a symposium dealing with the subject, **Biblical Religion and Syncretism**. Complete details of the program will be announced early in December.

<sup>1</sup>See *Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. 6, Part I, page 17.



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